

February 14, 2024

Senator Cathy Giessel
Senate Majority Leader
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Support for Senate Bill 121 – the Patient Choice of Pharmacy Act

Dear Sen. Giessel:

As a practicing Alaskan Pharmacist of over 21 years, I offer my strong support for Senate Bill 121, the Patient Choice of Pharmacy Act. SB121 protects patient independence of pharmacy choice and overall safety, while also lowering prescription costs for consumers and employers. Additionally, SB121 bars unfair trade practices that are literally bankrupting Alaskan pharmacies left and right. Alaska has lost 1 in 4 independent, mom-and-pop pharmacies since 2018 due to unfair trade practices employed by PBMs. Simply put, the playing field between PBMs and brick-and-mortar pharmacies in Alaska is completely out of balance and SB121 is an important first-step in putting things back into some degree of equilibrium.

I see on a daily basis how PBM practices negatively impact patient care, convenience, and cost. While PBMs were originally created to contain prescription costs, the fact of the matter is that they have utterly failed in that arena and now are the number one driver of increased prescription costs in America. They have become vertically-integrated behemoths that operate with impunity and predatory greed that is truly unmatched in any industry. Federal (FTC) investigations, United States Supreme Court Rulings (Rutledge v. PCMA), and Congressional action have done very little to slow the pernicious impacts of the PBM industry on our healthcare system and patient care in America. Statutory change at a state level is desperately necessary to prevent further damage the PBM industry will undoubtedly continue to wreak on our healthcare system.

Thank you for spearheading efforts to bring positive change to this incredibly broken pharmaceutical reimbursement environment through the provisions eloquently laid out in Senate Bill 121. You are an unsung hero for all Alaskans and your continued leadership in meaningful healthcare reform through SB121 will continue to benefit Alaskans for generations to come.

Respectfully,



Dan Nelson, PharmD
191 Eagle Ridge Road
Fairbanks, AK 99712