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March 13, 2015

Senator Cathy Giessel
State Capitol Room 427
Juneau, AK 99801
RE: SB 71

Dear Senator Giessel:

I am writing in support of SB 71, "An act relating to the practice of pharmacy; and relating to the administration of vaccines and related emergency medications." SB 71 will give already-trained and certified pharmacists the authority to immunize Alaska adults and children without having to contract with doctors/nurses to oversee their immunization programs.

I am a second generation Alaskan pharmacist. Together my father and I have served the residents of southern southeast Alaska for over 50 years. Island Pharmacy is Ketchikan's only professional clinic pharmacy and works closely with the prescribers in our area in offering specialized services such as compounding, mediset fillings, and durable medical equipment. Please note I did not list immunizations as a service even though we have two certified pharmacists capable of doing so.

The primary reason we have not offered immunizations is that I have not felt comfortable in asking an already overburdened practitioner community to go thru the lengthy paperwork arrangement required under the current collaborative practice arrangement. SB 71 would allow our pharmacy to start offering immunizations which our patients have been asking us to provide for several years.

I appreciate your advocacy on this important issue. It is my hope that SB71 is passed so that pharmacies such as ours can utilize our trained pharmacists to help provide for healthy Alaskans in our communities.

Sincerely,



Barry D. Christensen, RPh