



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
CHAIN DRUG STORES

Minnesota  
**RETAILERS**  
Association



March 19, 2018

The Honorable Joe Schomacker  
Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee  
509 State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

*Re: HB 2962 –pharmacist prescribing authority for tobacco cessation drugs, opiate antagonists, travel medications*

Dear Representative Schomacker and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our mutual members operating in the state of Minnesota, the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS), in partnership with the Minnesota Retailers Association (MnRA) and Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA), writes to convey strong support for HB 2962. This legislation would allow pharmacists to prescribe tobacco and nicotine cessation products, opiate antagonists for treating opioid overdose, and travel medications, thereby promoting access to these medications which ultimately serve to improve public health in the state of Minnesota.

Community pharmacists are well-situated in local communities and are oftentimes the most readily accessible healthcare provider. Research has shown that nearly all Americans (94%) live within five miles of a community retail pharmacy. Such access is especially critical in reaching the medically underserved and patients in rural communities. From helping patients take their medications effectively and safely, to providing preventative services, pharmacist services help keep people healthier and reduce costs.

Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States and the use of tobacco cessation drugs is one approach that has proven successful at helping individuals quit using harmful tobacco products. Additionally, the opioid epidemic is affecting many communities across the country and opiate antagonists are an important component in fighting this issue. By allowing pharmacists to prescribe tobacco cessation products and opiate antagonists, HB 2962 will make it easier for individuals to quit using tobacco or have an opioid addiction to access these helpful medications.

Furthermore, NACDS, MnRA and MGA fully support pharmacists practicing at the top of their license, including prescriptive authority for travel medications. This bill will provide patients easier access to such medications and improve patient care.

NACDS, MnRA and MGA appreciate the opportunity to provide perspective on the important role that pharmacists in patient care. We welcome the opportunity to work with policymakers to expand patient access to these and other important healthcare services offered by pharmacists.

Sincerely,

Joel Kurzman  
Director, State Government  
Affairs, NACDS

Bruce Nustad  
President, Minnesota Retailers  
Association

Jamie Pfuhl  
President, Minnesota Grocers  
Association

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