

OPPOSED HB 1040 Health Occupations—Pharmacists—Administration of Vaccinations

March 2, 2021

Dear Delegate Kelly and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

I am your classic overworked mom. I have two young children, I help run a nonprofit I founded, and I am in the middle of a pandemic with very little options for childcare. The idea of being able to take something off my plate sounds appealing. I might know more than many of you just how nice it would be to not have to schedule another doctor appointment to have my child vaccinated. However, I also know just how detrimental that could be. Pediatricians do so much more than simply administer vaccines. They are trained to look at the whole child. Every visit they scan for mental health issues, nutrition problems, possible abuse and neglect, along with your typical eyes, ears, nose, listen to the heart routine. They are another pair of educated eyes on your child to help you see things that might not be optimal about your child's health. The visits aren't long, but long enough to get a feeling for how your child is doing.

Parents often feel that these well visits are really only about making sure their child is vaccinated. If suddenly, overburdened families were able to skip these important doctor visits and just get their child vaccinated at the pharmacy, in the long run this would be detrimental to the child. They most likely would not go to well visits with their pediatrician. Pediatricians have an incredibly important role to play in the health of a child and we should ensure they are able to do that.

I am also deeply concerned about the situation happening at pharmacies across the country. This New York Times article talks about how overburdened pharmacies are and how it's leading to terrible mistakes.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/31/health/pharmacists-medication-errors.html>

The article was written last January and things have only gotten worse for pharmacists with Covid testing and vaccinations. If we allow the companies who run pharmacies to offer vaccines for children as young as three (!) think of all the mistakes that could be made in such an overworked environment.

It seems the point of this bill was to increase access to healthcare for children. That's a fantastic goal. Taking the pediatrician out of the process is not the way to solve this problem. Please oppose this bill.

Sincerely,

Annette Nelson

2603 Terrapin Rd.

Silver Spring, MD 20906