

SB840: COVID-19 Response Act of 2022
UNFAV
Citizen

Dear Members of the Senate Finance and Budget and Taxation Committees,

I oppose SB840. I am opposed to the concept of a digital health passport for any pharmaceutical product, but am most upset that language regarding pharmacists vaccinating children was hidden in this much larger bill. This has always been its own bill because it has enormous consequences for the safety of young children and for all patrons of pharmacies in our state. This bill has been sponsored every year in Maryland since 2015. It is a bill to make money for CVS and other chain pharmacies.

I reached out to a friend who has been a Pharmacist for 15 years and asked her what she thought of this bill. She said, "Sarah... Some Pharmacists do not like children."

Her comment ripped through me. I am a Pediatric Physical Therapist and I know that Pediatrics is a difficult specialty that takes a special person and skill set.

Pharmacists, who are smart enough to have gone through Medical or Nursing School, chose a profession that does not require them to do direct patient care. They certainly did not choose to do specialized direct patient care with pediatrics. Vaccinating a 3-year-old child is nothing like vaccinating an adult who sits patiently for a shot that they want to receive. Pharmacists are not pediatric specialists, and 3-year-olds will run, cry, and scream, especially if a provider does not know how to work with them.

According to the CDC's Recommended Child Immunization Schedule, children between ages 4-6 are recommended to get vaccinations for Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Chicken Pox, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, and Influenza. Now Covid 19 will be added to that long list. If the child is found to be appropriate, these can all be given in a single visit. Often 2 nurses assist a parent to hold a young child down to receive these shots. My friend, who works in a Wal Mart Pharmacy said she has two chairs with pull down tables to vaccinate people in. This is completely inappropriate. Young children are going to be half-dressed and screaming in the middle of Wal Mart, Target, and CVS.

This is not fair to Pharmacists who are busy filling prescriptions and will have to stop every time a child gets in line for some shots.

When children are vaccinated at the Pediatrician, they receive a full physical examination and assessment for vaccine readiness and appropriateness. The CDC recommended "schedule" is ONLY A RECOMMENDATION. It is not a checklist. Pharmacists do not have this level of expertise.

Please, I ask that the Committee give this bill an UNFAVORABLE report.

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