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Chairman Huffman and members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for allowing the Ohio Pharmacists Association to give proponent testimony regarding Senate Bill 144. As Executive Director and a pharmacist, I am excited to see the reinstatement of prior law brought forward in this Bill. During the pandemic and through the PREP Act, the ability for certain healthcare providers to administer vaccines was expanded to certified or registered pharmacy technicians who met certain criteria, training/certification and complied with state rules. Unfortunately, and without explanation, this provision was removed from law during the last Conference Committee on the state budget.

Pharmacy technicians began administering various vaccines, including COVID-19, under authority and Guidance of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on October 20, 2020. This authority occurred under the supervision of a pharmacist who is trained to administer vaccines. Anticipating continuance of this standard, The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy promulgated rules regarding Pharmacy Technician Administration of Vaccines effective September 1, 2023, corresponding to the anticipated expiration of the PREP Act. Currently, there are no laws to support this rule.

The continuance of this practice is key to increasing access to immunizations and resolving the workload issues currently faced by pharmacists that risk public safety. Over the years technicians administered vaccinations, countless lives were saved, preventive care was accessible, and pharmacists were able to better balance their workload. Today, that ability no longer exists. Patients accustomed to promptly receiving vaccinations at a retail pharmacy through a technician are now only able to do so through a pharmacist. This pulls the pharmacist away from dispensing, monitoring therapy, counseling, and assisting patients with their health care needs regarding prescription care.

The Ohio Pharmacists Association is asking our legislators to reinstate this proven process for vaccination, assist in balancing the pharmacist workload, improve public safety and give better access to disease prevention by supporting Senate Bill 144.

Most Respectfully,

David E. Burke, R.Ph, MBA

Executive Director

Ohio Pharmacists Association