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Chairman Huffman:

On behalf of our over 240 stores and more than 6,300 employees in Ohio, Walgreens appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on HB 73.

We are writing to express our concern with this legislation. HB 73 authorizes prescribers to issue a prescription for any drug and for any off-label indication. Moreover, and the area central to our concern, it requires a pharmacist to dispense such off-label prescriptions. The requirement for a pharmacist to dispense for any off-label use is absolute and does not afford the dispensing pharmacist the opportunity to exercise their professional judgement as to the appropriateness of the drug for the patient at that time.

Professional judgement is a cornerstone of pharmacy practice and a crucial aspect of a pharmacist's prescription dispensing approach. Professional judgement involves using accumulated knowledge and experience to make informed decisions and involves considering patient interests, legal obligations, professional standards, public interest, contractual terms, company procedures, and other relevant factors related to the situation at hand. This bill eliminates the opportunity and duty of a pharmacist to exercise expert understanding in the prescription dispensing decision. This will compromise the integrity of pharmacist's oversight and erode trust within the relationship between a patient and their pharmacist.

Our purpose is to champion the health and well-being of every community in America. Operating nearly 9,000 retail locations across America, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, Walgreens is proud to be a neighborhood health destination serving approximately 9 million customers each day. Walgreens pharmacists play a critical role in the U.S. healthcare system by providing a wide range of pharmacy and healthcare services and empowering pharmacists to provide quality and safe care is vitally important.

Thank you for your consideration,

Denevan O'Connell
Regional Director, State and Local Government Relations
Walgreen Co.

cc: Members, Senate Health Committee
President Matt Huffman

Member of Walgreens Boots Alliance