



February 28, 2023

[submitted electronically via: [HouseHealthandHumanServices@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseHealthandHumanServices@rilegislature.gov)]

The Honorable Susan Donovan  
Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee  
2 Rego Ave.  
Bristol, RI 02809

**RE: H5282 (Vella-Wilkinson) – Pharmacists & Hormonal Contraceptives – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Donovan, First Vice Chair Giraldo, Second Vice Chair Potter and members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) appreciates the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on House Bill (H) [5282](#) (Representative Vella-Wilkinson). This bill will authorize pharmacists to prescribe and administer FDA-approved hormonal contraceptives and allows for their services to be covered by the state Medicaid program and commercial insurers. We support this bill as it expands access to hormonal contraceptives, improves public health and reduces costs associated with unintended and mistimed pregnancies.

APhA is the largest association of pharmacists in the United States advancing the entire pharmacy profession. APhA represents pharmacists in all practice settings, including community pharmacies, hospitals, long-term care facilities, specialty pharmacies, community health centers, physician offices, ambulatory clinics, managed care organizations, hospice settings, and government facilities. Our members strive to improve medication use, advance patient care and enhance public health. In Rhode Island, with 1,140 licensed pharmacists and 1,520 pharmacy technicians, APhA represents the pharmacists, student pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians that practice in numerous settings and provide care to many of your constituents. As the voice of pharmacy, APhA leads the profession and equips members for their role as the medication expert in team-based, patient-centered care. APhA inspires, innovates, and creates opportunities for members and pharmacists worldwide to optimize medication use and health for all.

We also support the submitted testimony from the Rhode Island Pharmacists Association.

Nearly 90% of Americans live within five miles of a pharmacy, and pharmacies are often open nights and weekends, when other care settings are closed. Pharmacists are frequently referred to as the most accessible healthcare professional, as many patients can ask for advice and counseling regarding their health and medications without the requirement of an appointment. Pharmacists are the healthcare system's

medication experts and are highly qualified to analyze and optimize medication regimens to lower costs and improve health.

Currently, 22 states have authorized pharmacists to prescribe hormonal contraceptives.<sup>1</sup> In Oregon, this authorization helped the state save \$1.6 million in the first year of implementation.<sup>2</sup>

We applaud the insurance coverage language included in H5282. Coverage provisions for pharmacist-provided preventative health care services are paramount to the success of H5282 and to ensure patients have more time with their most accessible health care professional, their pharmacist.

For these reasons, we support H5282 and respectfully request your “AYE” vote. If you have any questions or require additional information, please don’t hesitate to contact E. Michael Murphy, PharmD, MBA, APhA Advisor for State Government Affairs by email at [mmurphy@aphanet.org](mailto:mmurphy@aphanet.org).

Sincerely,



E. Michael Murphy, PharmD, MBA  
Advisor for State Government Affairs  
American Pharmacists Association

cc: Representative Joshua J. Giraldo, First Vice Chair  
Representative Brandon C. Potter, Second Vice Chair  
Representative Mia A. Ackerman  
Representative Samuel A. Azzinaro  
Representative David A. Bennett  
Representative Megan L. Cotter  
Representative Barbara Ann Fenton-Fung  
Representative Kathleen A. Fogarty  
Representative Arthur Handy  
Representative Rebecca M. Kislak  
Representative Michelle E. McGaw  
Representative David J. Place  
Representative June Speakman  
Representative Jennifer A. Stewart

Michael Baxter, APhA Acting Head of Government Affairs

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<sup>1</sup> Pharmacist Prescribing: Hormonal Contraceptives. Available at <https://naspaspa.us/resource/contraceptives/>.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson L, et.al. Pharmacist Provision of Hormonal Contraception in the Oregon Medicaid Population. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2019;133(6):1231-1237. doi: 10.1097/AOG.0000000000003286.