

# H.R. 592

## **Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act**

*Increasing patient access to basic health care services.*

*Sponsored by Rep. Brett Guthrie (KY-02), Rep. G.K. Butterfield (NC-01),*

*Rep. Todd Young (IN-09), and Rep. Ron Kind (WI-03).*

Our nation suffers from a critical shortage of health care professionals, specifically in rural areas. H.R. 592 would allow for Medicare reimbursement of certain services that are already allowed under current state laws, when performed in medically underserved communities.

Pharmacists already have the ability to perform many basic health care services, depending on the scope of their state law. Unfortunately, without reimbursement, most pharmacists are unable to divert valuable time and resources to perform them. H.R. 592 would rectify this by allowing Medicare reimbursement for these services in medically underserved areas.

Some of the services that could be included:

- Chronic disease management
- Cholesterol screenings
- Immunizations
- Blood pressure screenings
- Diabetes screenings
- Tobacco cessation interventions
- Diet and obesity counseling

In many rural communities, pharmacists are the sole health care provider and serve as the initial point of contact for many Medicare beneficiaries. Pharmacists can play a significant role in the prevention and management of many chronic conditions, saving significant health care dollars in the long run.

Many patients view their pharmacist as a critical member of their health care team, depending on them for not just filling medications and discussing potential side effects, but also for chronic disease management and as the initial contact for their health care concerns. The Sports Medicine Licensure Clarity Act seeks to increase access for rural patients to basic services in medically underserved communities.

To cosponsor, please contact Megan Jackson in Rep. Guthrie's office, Saul Hernandez in Rep. Butterfield's office, Jaymi Light in Rep. Young's office, or Elizabeth Stower in Rep. Kind's office..