

Hello,

Thank you very much for letting me speak today. My name is Lynne Vezina. I am the owner of Vermont Family Pharmacy located in the New North End of Burlington. My Father opened this pharmacy 39 years ago.

I am asking you to support House Bill 353. As the owner of a Pharmacy, I am telling you that the current System is Broken. We are hurting so bad that I am afraid there will be no pharmacies left in Vermont. The situation is that dire.

The reimbursements have been bad for many years but now they are just not sustainable. Pharmacies cannot survive in this environment. We are faced with increased costs and yet decreased profits. I am very concerned that I will go the way of Marbleworks, Wilcox Pharmacy and Brattleboro Pharmacy to name a few of the pharmacies in the State of Vermont that have gone out of business in the past 2 years.

You may ask why do we need to do something in the legislature. Well, if you don't, this situation will only get worse. I am asking you to do something that many other states have done already.

We are filling prescriptions and the PBM's are reimbursing us less than our cost. I fill a prescription and I am paid 13 cents. That is paying for not only the cost of the medication but the vial, the label, the labor costs and the 10-cent tax to the state. I bought a medication and it cost me \$80.00 and I was reimbursed by the PBM \$20.00. I filed a grievance, but it was denied. I ask you what business would survive this. Can you see how the system is not working? Do you care about the people in our State? If you don't do anything to fix this then the answer is no.

We have an important job to do. There are many details that we need to pay attention to. Should the biggest concern be the reimbursement from the PBM or should it be the needs of the patient?

This bill has the potential to improve the lives of the citizens of Vermont.

I have a family with 4 children and 1 of them is a special needs child. They have been coming to my pharmacy for years. The Dad got a new job and his insurance

changed to MVP they were told that they could no longer come to my Pharmacy. They have to drive 20 minutes to go to South Burlington to get their prescriptions filled at the CVS on Dorset Street. The mother has pleaded with them to let her fill their prescriptions at my pharmacy, but they will not. She needs to take 1 hour out of her day to go get her prescriptions for her daughter when she could do this in 10 minutes. This time is very valuable to the Mother but not to the PBM.

A diabetic elderly patient that lives 2 doors down from my pharmacy is forced to go mail order for his prescriptions. We can easily bring him anything he needs but his insurance has forced him to Mail order. He told them there is no reason for him to change. He can get everything he needs and we deliver it to him whenever he wants. He asked to stay with us, but they would not allow that.

A patient was in the store last week to fill an emergency prescription for an antibiotic. They told me I am so happy you are here to help me. I wish I did not have to go mail order and could get all my prescriptions from you. If you do nothing, this patient will no longer have me to fill their emergency prescription.

Please realize that what I do every day is help people. You can come into my store and ask any of my patients and they will tell you how much we do for them and how they greatly appreciate us. We are there to advocate for them, to answer their questions and be a resource.

I am one of only 2 compounding pharmacies in the State of Vermont. We make medications for patients that are not commercially available. A sick child being discharged from Boston Children's can come to us to get a medication made just for them. If I am gone who will take care of these children. Will they have to move to Boston because there is no one here to help them.

You have an opportunity to improve the lives of the citizens of the State of Vermont. Let me do what I love to do and help improve the health of our citizens. Please approve moving forward with House Bill 353. Let's not lose another Pharmacy in this State.