

Testimony by Jonathan Heiser, RN, Central Vermont Medical Center
S.242, an act relating to prescription drugs dispensed by a health insurer-designated pharmacy for
administration to a patient in a health care setting
April 13, 2022

Thank you, Chair Lyons, for the opportunity to testify on S.242 today. My name is Jonathan Heiser, and I am a registered nurse at Central Vermont Medical Center. I work in an outpatient multi-specialty clinic where we treat patients for a variety of conditions using and administering specialty injectable medications. I am going to share with you the patient safety, quality and access concerns that I have experienced with the insurer-mandated non local mail order pharmacy requirement for many of these medications.

My concerns fall into the following three areas:

- Regular difficulty coordinating with insurance-designated, non-local mail order pharmacies
 - Transcription errors when pharmacy transfers are required
 - Complicated automated answering services
 - Long hold times
 - Issues verifying insurance coverage
 - Canceling prescriptions after not being able to reach patient or office
- Lack of trackable medication transport and storage
 - Regular monthly instances of medication being delivered to the wrong office or location causing delayed care for patients and questionable medication pedigree
 - No tracking or quality measures included with deliveries.
- Administration of potentially mishandled medication
 - Instances involving patients mentioning it had not been refrigerated, left in delivery packaging, left in the car, and syringe plunger accidentally removed
 - Severe patient safety risk having to administer a medication that could cause harm or be less effective because of mishandling

Patients requiring specialty injectable or intravenous medications are typically working hard to manage long-term (sometimes life-long) chronic illnesses impacting their ability to move or even breathe. Any delay, any confusion, or any medications of questionable pedigree present real harm to our patients.

I hope the Committee passes S.242, and I am happy to answer any questions you have today or in the future.