April 12th, 2023

The Honorable Marc Berman  
Chair, Assembly Business and Professions Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 379  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1286 (Haney) Stop Dangerous Pharmacies Act – Support

Dear Chair Berman,

The California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA), one of the state’s foremost grassroots senior and disability advocacy organizations, representing over 1 million Californians, is proud to support AB 1286 (Haney), a bill that would allow specially-trained pharmacy technicians to perform tasks that pharmacists are now required to perform. Additionally, this bill would allow pharmacists more time for reducing the incidence of dangerous medication errors and for such duties as essential consultation on patients’ prescriptions.

A recent survey of over 4,000 pharmacists conducted by the California Board of Pharmacy shows that medication errors are particularly high in chain drug stores. For example, only 15% of chain drug store survey informants could report fewer than one error a month and 25% of chain drug store informants reported 3-5 medication errors/month. According to the survey, over half the errors in chain stores involved incorrect directions; nearly half also involved incorrect strength. Further, the survey shows that over three quarters of chain store pharmacists do not have time to adequately screen patients before immunizations. The survey indicated that this level of chain store medication error is linked to inadequate time for pharmacists to perform key duties.

The survey also showed that five-sixths of chain store pharmacists reported that they did not have enough time for needed patient consultations while dispensing medicines. Pharmacists are professionals trained to act as a backstop against prescribing errors. They are in a unique position to detect the risks of interactions between prescribed and non-prescribed medications. Pharmacists can also note adverse reactions and medication complications that prescribers may have missed.

Pharmacists should have sufficient time to dispense medicines more safely and to perform their vital consultation duties. Licensed pharmacy technicians with proper training should help them get more of this time. Lives, particularly the lives of seniors, would be saved from medication errors and inadequate counseling.

For these reasons, CARA strongly supports AB 1286, and we respectfully ask for your AYE vote.

CARA/ 1675 7th St. PO Box 23754/ Oakland, CA 94623/ 510-662-4086/ www.californiaalliance.org
Sincerely,

Hene Kelly  
Chair, Legislative Committee  
California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA)

Keith Umemo
Co-Chair, Legislative Committee  
California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA)