

Testimony of Senator Johnson Introducing LD 32, "An Act To Expand the Types of Vaccines That May Be Administered by Pharmacists"

January 31, 2013

Good afternoon Senator Patrick, Representative Herbig and Members of the Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development Committee. I am Senator Chris Johnson, representing District 20, which is all of Lincoln County except Dresden, plus Windsor, Washington, and Friendship. I am pleased to come before you to introduce LD 32, "An Act To Expand the Types of Vaccines That May Be Administered by Pharmacists."

I submitted this bill to solve a shortcoming in the law implemented last session which became an issue for a constituent. Last session the Legislature, wisely I think, voted to give people greater access to vaccines by allowing pharmacies to administer them to those who meet the CDC guidelines if they have a prescription. This made it easier and in most cases less expensive for people to get necessary vaccines. Unfortunately, it left out a small group of people who did not meet the CDC criteria, but whose doctors felt should have the vaccines. My constituent had several underlying medical conditions which made his doctor recommend that he get the shingles vaccine. When he went to his local pharmacy he was told that because he was 59 and the CDC recommended the shingles vaccine to those over 60, they could not give him the vaccine, even though he had a prescription from his doctor.

This bill seeks to correct that situation by clarifying that if a person has a valid prescription from a doctor that states that even though the consumer doesn't meet the CDC recommendations the doctor believes they should have it, then the pharmacy may administer the vaccine.

I believe that this should allow pharmacies to get vaccines to those who really need it and still maintain the integrity of the process and the safety of consumers.

Thank you for your time. I would be glad to answer any questions.