

## **HB 111 Test and Treat Talking Points**

- This legislation would allow pharmacists to provide point-of-care testing and treatment for Influenza and Strep.
- The testing and treatment would be provided through a strict protocol with a physician – similar to ones in place now for immunizations.
- Currently, consultant pharmacists can already perform the test in certain settings.
- The Board of Pharmacy and the Board of Medicine together would promulgate rules to ensure the best and safest patient care possible.
- The test for both the Flu and Strep is a simple swab test that is inserted into a device that within 15 minutes or less produces either a positive or negative result.
- There is no diagnosis – just a positive (+) or negative (-) sign, much like an over-the-counter pregnancy test.
- The commonly used test is CLIA waived, meaning it is so simple that a 7<sup>th</sup> grader could perform the test. (FDA Defined)
- Currently, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services put the review of two potential diagnostic tests for influenza designed to be purchased over-the-counter for home use on the fast track.
- Pharmacists can already perform much more complicated procedures than this, including administering a long acting antipsychotic injection in a pharmacy (legislation was passed to allow this in 2017).
- Depending on the protocol with a physician, treatment could allow for a pharmacist to dispense an antiviral for a positive flu test, such as Tamiflu, or an antibiotic for a positive strep test.
- According to the CDC, 80,000 people died of influenza last winter in U.S.
- Diagnosing and treating influenza within 48 hours of the onset of flu-like symptoms can shorten the duration and severity of the illness.
- Currently, baloxavir marboxil, the first new flu drug in 20 years, is under priority review of the FDA to be approved by the end of this year. This drug has shown in trials to decrease the duration of symptoms with one dose, and demonstrated a significant reduction in the spread of the virus from person to person in just one day.

- With 86% of the population living within five miles of a pharmacy and many 24-hour options, Pharmacists are some of the most accessible health care professionals.
- Currently, 15 states, including Minnesota, Michigan, Washington, Vermont, Wisconsin, Virginia, and Idaho allow for point-of-care testing and treatment for certain illnesses. There are 11 other states in the implementation phase of allowing pharmacists to provide these services.