



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHAIN DRUG STORES

July 22, 2022

Anne Sodergren, Executive Officer
California State Board of Pharmacy
2720 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95833

Re: Board of Pharmacy Licensure Delay Issues

Dear Ms. Sodergren,

The California Retailers Association (CRA) and National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) are writing to express concerns with recent delays in approvals of licenses and permits by the Board of Pharmacy.

Our members value the Board of Pharmacy's role in oversight, enforcement and licensure of pharmacies in California. Likewise, we support and appreciate the Board's mission to protect consumers. Unfortunately, our members have reported a concerning trend with respect to the approval process for new permits and licenses. We are concerned that these delays in licensure approvals are jeopardizing patient access to critical pharmacy services for Californians.

We understand the current staffing shortages that are plaguing almost every industry in California, including retail pharmacy, and we are sympathetic to the lack of personnel resources at the Board that may be contributing to licensure delays. However, it appears as though the process to receive a temporary permit or a license continues to extend, in some cases running upwards of a year. The 2022-23 State Budget recently signed by the Governor includes an expansion of Medi-Cal services for all eligible Californians, regardless of age or immigration status. Given the existing demand for healthcare services and the impending increased caseload, we respectfully request that the Board prioritize expediting licensure applications to meet this need.

The California Retailers Association is the only statewide trade association representing all segments of the retail industry including general merchandise, department stores, mass merchandisers, online marketplaces, convenience stores, supermarkets and grocery stores, chain drug, and specialty retail such as auto, vision, jewelry, hardware, and home stores. Our members include national chains as well as independent retailers from across California.

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores represents traditional drug stores, supermarkets and mass merchants with pharmacies. Chains operate over 40,000 pharmacies, and NACDS' over 80 chain member companies include regional chains, with a minimum of four stores, and national companies. Chains employ nearly 3 million individuals, including 155,000 pharmacists. They fill over 3 billion prescriptions yearly, and help patients use medicines correctly and safely, while offering innovative services that improve patient health and health care affordability.

We are here to be of assistance to work with you on solutions to this issue to ensure our members are able to open their pharmacies and sites in a timely manner and ensure demand for critical medications and other pharmacy services is being met. Please do not hesitate to contact Jennifer Snyder or Lindsay Gullahorn with Capitol Advocacy at jsnyder@capitoladvocacy.com or lgullahorn@capitoladvocacy.com if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rachel Michelin".

Rachel Michelin, President
California Retailers Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve C. Anderson".

Steve C. Anderson, FASAE, CAE, IOM
President & Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Chain Drug Stores

cc: Kimberly Kirchmeyer, Director, Department of Consumer Affairs
Richard Figueroa, Office of Governor Newsom