

Comments for Legislative Committee on Health Care

RE: Shortage of Pharmacists in Nevada

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Executive Secretary
Nevada State Board of Pharmacy**

The Board of Pharmacy currently licenses 1872 resident pharmacists and 6526 out of state pharmacists, plus 638 intern pharmacists. The past five years demonstrated a shortage of pharmacists not only in Nevada, but nation wide, primarily due to there simply not being enough pharmacists educated and trained to practice. The licensing process within Nevada has never been an impediment, since we have reciprocity with all the other states and licensing is achieved through a national exam, now recognized by all of those states. We generally have an applicant licensed within a matter of days after receipt of qualifications, and very few are denied. Since qualifications are pretty much standardized throughout the country, the only reasons for denial are such things past disciplinary actions and/or drug abuse issues.

We are happy to report that the shortage of pharmacists experienced the past five years has resolved and for the following reasons:

- Several new pharmacy schools have sprouted up over the past few years and existing pharmacy schools have increased enrollment, resulting in more graduates.
- The rapid growth in the number of pharmacies in Nevada, all of which needed pharmacists, has subsided. The two major chains that had no presence in Nevada ten years ago and literally have built hundreds of stores, have saturated our pharmacy market.
- There has been a consolidation of many pharmacies (i.e. Rite-Aid sold to Long's which then sold to CVS and some Albertson's sold to Save Mart) resulting in the closing of several stores making available those pharmacists.
- The growth in our population has leveled with the economic turndown, decreasing prescription volume somewhat.
- Automation, fulfillment centers, central fill pharmacies, and mail-order prescription services have allowed more prescriptions to be filled with less manpower.