



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHAIN DRUG STORES

August 19, 2022
The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor
State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 1259 (Laird) Pharmacists: furnishing opioid antagonists – SIGNATURE REQUEST

Dear Governor Newsom,

The California Retailers Association (CRA) and the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) respectfully request your signature on SB 1259 (Laird), which will allow pharmacists to furnish opioid antagonists, approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, without a prescription. This bill will have a negligible fiscal impact on the State.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), overdose deaths involving opioids like fentanyl, heroin and prescription opioids have increased by more than eight times since 1999, and nearly 75% of drug overdose deaths in the U.S. in 2020 were the result of an opioid. Over 82% of those deaths involved synthetic opioids like fentanyl. Opioid antagonists are life-saving medications used to treat patients experiencing overdose by reversing the respiratory depression associated with opioid use. Currently, pharmacists in California are authorized to furnish only one opioid antagonist without a prescription (naloxone). SB 1259 takes an important step in combatting the opioid crisis by broadening pharmacists' ability to expand access to essential life-saving opioid antagonist medications.

As healthcare providers on the front lines of the opioid abuse crisis, the chain pharmacy community is strongly committed to combating the opioid abuse plaguing the communities we serve. We are steadfast in our dedication to pursuing and implementing targeted and workable policy solutions, like SB 1259, to prevent misuse and abuse of prescription opioids. For these reasons, we are proud to support this critical legislation and urge you to sign this bill.

The California Retailers Association is the only statewide trade association representing all segments of the retail industry including general merchandise, department stores, mass merchandisers, restaurants, convenience stores, supermarkets and grocery stores, chain drug, and specialty retail such as auto, vision, jewelry, hardware and home stores. CRA works on behalf of California's retail industry, which operates over 400,000 retail establishments with a gross domestic product of billions annually and employs millions of Californians.

NACDS 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 healthcare

affordability. NACDS members also include more than 900 supplier partners and over 70 international members representing 21 countries. Please visit NACDS.org.

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,



Rachel Michelin, President
California Retailers Association



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

cc: The Honorable John Laird, Author