

ISSUE BRIEF

ENSURING COMMUNITY ACCESS TO PHARMACIST SERVICES ACT (H.R. 3164)

BACKGROUND

The *Ensuring Community Access to Pharmacist Services (ECAPS) Act* (H.R. 3164) is an important bipartisan bill that ensures patients maintain access to essential pharmacist services and strengthens America's public health preparedness.

The ECAPS Act makes permanent public health emergency authorities related to pharmacist patient care services, including testing and administering prophylactic treatment. The Department of Health and Human Services granted pharmacists the ability to perform these services using authorities in the *Public Health Service Act* and the *Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act*. It also automatically allows pharmacists to perform these patient care services during future public health emergencies. HHS has extended the current pharmacist patient care authorities through 2029, reiterating the need for a statutory fix to make these authorities permanent. The ECAPS Act also allows these services to be covered and reimbursed under Medicare Part B, ultimately enabling more patients to access them through their pharmacy.

With nearly 90% of Americans living within five miles of a pharmacy, pharmacists have played a key role in America's public health infrastructure by ordering and administering tests and treatments and providing services to prevent the spread of influenza, Respiratory Syncytial Virus, strep throat, and COVID-19.

AMCP Urges Passage of the *Ensuring Community Access to Pharmacists Services Act*

AMCP supports the *Ensuring Community Access to Pharmacist Services Act*. This bill will help ensure that Americans can continue to rely on pharmacists as essential partners in pandemic preparedness and response. The ECAPS Act will also improve patient access to tests and treatments by authorizing pharmacists to provide these services and receive reimbursement under Medicare Part B. The ECAPS Act addresses disparities in public health preparedness in medically underserved communities like rural areas by allowing these patients to seek care from their most accessible provider.

AMCP calls on Members of Congress to cosponsor and ultimately enact the *Ensuring Community Access to Pharmacist Services Act* (H.R. 3164), which will preserve access to essential care administered by pharmacists and increase the country's readiness for future public health emergencies.

