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I am a constituent of [ASSEMBLYMEMBER/SENATOR NAME] and I am a [PHARMACIST/TECHNICIAN/STUDENT] at [SCHOOL/PLACE OF WORK]. I am writing on behalf of myself, in support of A4611B/S5584, a bill that will register Pharmacy Technicians within New York State, and therefore help to prevent narcotic diversion through establishing accountability and improving medication safety through training requirements.

You may ask – what is a Pharmacy Technician? Pharmacy Technicians support the Pharmacist in the technical duties within a hospital or community pharmacy – from gathering materials for the Pharmacist to mix/reconstitute or prepare, to managing the medication inventory. Pharmacists train for years to optimize patients’ medication regimens and could not do their jobs without the support of Technicians.

Unfortunately, New York State is one of only **six** states in the country which does not register/license Pharmacy Technicians. Pharmacy Technicians are part of the only health profession which has typical access to **narcotics** and yet is not regulated in any way in New York. In the setting of the opioid epidemic affecting our state, the last thing we need is a potential source of opioids getting into our communities. Because there is no registration (and therefore no public accountability like there is for Pharmacists, Nurses, Physicians, etc) and no minimum requirements, anyone can become a Pharmacy Technician, even someone fired due to diverting narcotics. While the vast majority of Pharmacy Technicians are excellent and dedicated people, there should be some accountability mechanism to prevent diversion of narcotics.

In addition, Pharmacists are responsible for preparing intravenous medications for patients in hospitals and infusion clinics. It is of critical importance that the Technicians who work in these settings have a minimum knowledge-base, recognized by a nationally-recognized certification body (such as the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board – PTCB). This will also ensure the Technicians receive continuing education to support medication safety and reduce the risk for medication errors.

Emily Jerry was a year-and-a-half old child in Ohio who suffered a fatal medication error due to a compounding/preparation mistake made by a Pharmacy Technician. At the time, Ohio also did not register/regulate Pharmacy Technicians – they now are. Emily’s father, Chris Jerry, runs a foundation in her name and grades states based on their regulatory framework around technicians and therefore ability to support medication safety – New York scores a ZERO.

In conclusion, I urge your support for this legislation, which will register Pharmacy Technicians in New York State and create a public accountability mechanism required for this health profession, especially as it relates to narcotics. It will also require certification for Pharmacy Technicians assisting in high risk medications and therefore improve medication safety.

This bill is supported by all major Pharmacy Organizations in New York State (such as NYSCHP, PSSNY, Chain Pharmacy Association of NYS) as well as the Greater New York Hospital Association (GNYHA) and 1199 SEIU (United Healthcare Workers East).

Last Name, First Name

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