Dear Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am a pharmacist with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

I am writing to ask for your support for legislation to be introduced during the upcoming legislative session.

The bill: “Fair and Equitable Reimbursement for Pharmacy Services” would require reimbursement of patient-care services provided by appropriately certified pharmacists.

Pharmacists are educated and trained, to not only dispense medications but to also manage the safety and effectiveness of patient’s medications. In addition, pharmacists are trained in disease management to help patients better manage their conditions and to meet goals set by their other healthcare providers. Pharmacists assist patients every day in better managing conditions such as high blood pressure, heart failure, high cholesterol, diabetes, infectious diseases, pain, and asthma. In addition pharmacists are trained to administer vaccinations and teach patients how to administer insulin and other medications, as well as how to use devices designed to optimize their care, such as glucose meters, blood pressure cuffs, peak flow meters, nebulizers and spacers for inhalers.

The failure of insurance companies to recognize pharmacists as providers makes it difficult for pharmacists to be reimbursed for providing services identical to other health professionals and for patients to receive the services that pharmacists could provide. In many rural communities, pharmacists are among the few health care providers readily available to individuals needing care. Payment models that preclude participation from healthcare practitioners, such as pharmacists, who are qualified to provide care have the unintended consequence of limiting access to care and decreased patient outcomes and quality of life.

Studies have shown that enhanced pharmacy services reduce overall health care costs. Despite what some say, they DO NOT raise health costs. There is as much as $4 in benefits expected for every $1 invested in clinical pharmacy services. And as a matter of fairness, why should pharmacists be expected to provide equivalent health care services as that provided by other professionals without being paid on an equitable basis?

Passage of the bill would help make North Carolina, along with other states like West Virginia, Ohio, and Texas, as a leader in producing sustainable business models allowing pharmacists practicing at the top of their profession and would help attract top candidates to jobs across the state, as well as improve access to care and improved patient outcomes.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Sincerely,