Dear Chairman Ortiz y Pino and Ranking Member Gould and Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Neville:

We ask you to support H.B. 42, Pharmaceutical Services Reimbursement Parity. This legislation would require reimbursement of patient-care services provided by appropriately certified pharmacists. Improving patient access to care in rural and frontier communities requires reimbursement for services provided by pharmacists, who may be the only accessible healthcare provider in some communities.

The pharmacist clinician certification, established by the 1993 Pharmacist Prescriptive Authority Act (PPAA), permits licensed pharmacists to collaborate with physicians to provide certain primary care and specialty care services. This includes performing physical exams, ordering lab tests, and prescribing appropriate medications.

Although pharmacists have had the ability to register as a pharmacist clinician in New Mexico, the lack of reimbursement by insurance companies has made it difficult for patients to receive the services they could provide. Without sustainable reimbursement, there is no financial incentive for the healthcare systems and clinics to invest in pharmacist clinicians for improving access to care.

H.B. 42 creates the opportunity for clinics, healthcare systems, and community pharmacies to improve patient access to primary care, including in rural and frontier communities that lack access to other healthcare providers. According to the New Mexico Health Care Workforce Committee 2019 Annual Report, 34 percent of New Mexico’s residents reside in rural or frontier counties, most of which do not meet the national benchmark for providers needed to serve their population.¹ 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, often in rural and frontier settings. Reimbursing pharmacist clinicians for services would support patient access to pharmacist-provided primary care services, including those in rural and frontier communities.

Thank you for considering this important legislation to leverage pharmacist clinicians to better meet the needs of New Mexico’s patients in rural and frontier communities.

Sincerely,

Stacey Cox  
Executive Director  
National Center for Frontier Communities

Tom Kraus  
Vice President, Government Relations  
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists

cc: Senator Jeff Steinborn, Senate Public Affairs
    Senator Craig W. Brandt, Senate Public Affairs
    Senator Stuart Ingle, Senate Public Affairs
    Senator Antoinette Sedillo Lopez, Senate Public Affairs
    Senator Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics, Senate Public Affairs
    Senator George K. Munoz, Senate Finance Committee
    Senator William F. Burt, Senate Finance Committee
    Senator Pete Campos, Senate Finance Committee
    Senator Jacob R. Candelaria, Senate Finance Committee
    Senator Roberto "Bobby" J. Gonzales, Senate Finance Committee
    Senator Gay G. Kernan, Senate Finance Committee
    Senator Nancy Rodriguez, Senate Finance Committee
    Senator Sander Rue, Senate Finance Committee
    Senator John M. Sapien, Senate Finance Committee
    Senator James P. White, Senate Finance Committee
    New Mexico Pharmacists Association
    New Mexico Society of Health-System Pharmacists