

March 2, 2017

Senator Lee Heider, Chairman
Senate Health and Welfare Committee
Idaho State Capitol
Boise, ID 83720

RE: H 191

Dear Chairman Heider and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of 185,000 AARP Idaho members, I am encouraging your full support for House Bill 191. This bill would allow the Idaho Board of Pharmacy the rulemaking authority to designate to pharmacists the prescriptive authority for drugs within certain classifications.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Social Security Administration, one in three older Idahoans rely solely on Social Security for their income at an average of \$14,603 per year. With an estimated one of every six dollars spent on health care, every opportunity to reduce unnecessary cost for the senior population should be examined. Older Americans use prescription drugs more than any other segment of the U.S. population and typically on a chronic basis. For older adults, prescription drugs are critical in managing their chronic conditions, curing diseases, keeping them healthy and improving their quality of life.

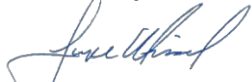
AARP Idaho supports cost-reducing policies which increase access to quality health care. Providing alternative access for prescription medication saves both time and money for the patient as well as for any family caregiver involved. Since pharmacists are one of the most accessible health care providers in Idaho, this bill will increase availability to health care, especially in rural communities or when a patient cannot secure a timely appointment to see a provider. As highlighted in the U.S. Public Health Service's evidence-based report, *Improving Patient and Health System Outcomes through Advanced Pharmacy Practice, A Report to the U.S. Surgeon General 2011*, increasing pharmacist involvement in patient care results in greater cost savings across the health care spectrum.

Since this authority would be given through the administrative rules process, the important principles of governmental transparency and public scrutiny would still be followed thus

ensuring public safety. Ultimately, the legislature would still have the authority to reject the language before the final rule goes into effect.

For these reasons, we urge your support for H 191 and appreciate your consideration of this legislation. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact my Associate State Director of Advocacy, Françoise Cleveland at (208) 855-4005.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lupe Wissel".

Lupe Wissel, State Director
AARP Idaho