

Submitter: Russell Whaley
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1528

While the bill aims to improve access to preventive services and immunizations, its core provision grants the state Public Health Officer (or a designated physician) sweeping authority to issue statewide standing orders for prescriptions or devices to “control, prevent, mitigate or treat any infectious or noninfectious disease or other significant public health concern.”

This language is dangerously broad and vague. The phrase “any other significant public health concern” could potentially apply to virtually any condition the officer deems worthy—ranging from chronic illnesses to behavioral or social issues—without meaningful legislative oversight or defined limits.

Standing orders bypass individualized medical evaluation, allowing pharmacists or others to dispense treatments to the general population based solely on one official’s determination. This undermines the patient-physician relationship, informed consent, and personal medical autonomy.

Concentrating such expansive power in a single appointed official, especially under an emergency clause that takes effect immediately upon passage, risks misuse and erodes democratic checks and balances. Existing public health laws already provide tools for genuine emergencies. SB 1598 goes far beyond what is necessary and prudent.

Please reject this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.