

# AQUINAS COLLEGE

Fred Wood  
Idaho House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0038

Dear Dr. Wood:

I write to you in regards to Idaho House Bill 191 in my capacity as a Professor of Economics at Aquinas College.

The United States is one of the few countries in the world that “bottlenecks” access to certain medications by conditioning them on first obtaining a prescription from a physician or other healthcare provider licensed by the state.

For low-risk medications this creates system-wide inefficiencies. As one example, an individual who seeks a basic motion sickness patch in preparation for an upcoming cruise must traditionally:

- Schedule an appointment with a prescriber
- Take off work and pay a co-payment for an office visit
- Receive a prescription from the prescriber
- Take the prescription to a pharmacy to be filled

This increases costs to the healthcare system and particularly the consumer in both direct out-of-pocket cost and time-cost. In addition, it wastes critical primary care time that could otherwise be spent on higher priority care.

With respect to low-risk medications and low-risk health conditions, increasing access at pharmacies can unleash the benefits of private sector competition, namely increased access, lowered costs, and improved quality.

Several states have recently taken action to make consumer access to low risk medications easier, and the results that have been published have been very positive.

Sincerely,



Lewis Butler