

SENATE BILL NO. 231—SENATOR HECK

MARCH 7, 2007

Referred to Committee on Commerce and Labor

SUMMARY—Revises provisions relating to confidentiality of contents of prescriptions. (BDR 54-524)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: No.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to prescription drugs; providing expressly for the confidentiality of the contents of a prescription on file in a pharmacy; prohibiting any person who has access to the contents of a prescription on file in a pharmacy from divulging any of the contents of the prescription to any person with certain exceptions; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

Existing law provides that prescriptions on file in a pharmacy are not public records, and also prohibits a pharmacist from releasing the contents of a prescription except to specified persons under specified circumstances. (NRS 639.238) This bill expressly provides that all contents of prescriptions on file in a pharmacy are confidential. This bill also prohibits any person who has access to the contents of a prescription on file in a pharmacy from divulging any of the contents of the prescription to any person except to the persons currently authorized by law to receive such information. Additionally, this bill provides that aggregated data concerning prescriptions can be released if the identity of the patients and the prescribing physicians is not revealed.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. NRS 639.238 is hereby amended to read as follows:
639.238 1. Prescriptions filled and on file in a pharmacy ,
including, without limitation, all contents of prescriptions, are
confidential and are not a public record. Except as otherwise
provided in *this section and* NRS 639.2357, a pharmacist *and any*



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1 *other person who has access to the contents of prescriptions on*
2 *file in a pharmacy* shall not divulge *any of* the contents of any
3 prescription or provide a copy of any prescription ~~H~~ *to any person,*
4 except : ~~to:~~

5 (a) The patient for whom the original prescription was issued;
6 (b) The practitioner who originally issued the prescription;
7 (c) A practitioner who is then treating the patient;
8 (d) A member, inspector or investigator of the Board or an
9 inspector of the Food and Drug Administration or an agent of the
10 Investigation Division of the Department of Public Safety;

11 (e) An agency of state government charged with the
12 responsibility of providing medical care for the patient;

13 (f) An insurance carrier, on receipt of written authorization
14 signed by the patient or his legal guardian, authorizing the release of
15 such information;

16 (g) Any person authorized by an order of a district court;

17 (h) Any member, inspector or investigator of a professional
18 licensing board which licenses a practitioner who orders
19 prescriptions filled at the pharmacy;

20 (i) Other registered pharmacists for the limited purpose of and to
21 the extent necessary for the exchange of information relating to
22 persons who are suspected of:

23 (1) Misusing prescriptions to obtain excessive amounts of
24 drugs; or

25 (2) Failing to use a drug in conformity with the directions for
26 its use or taking a drug in combination with other drugs in a manner
27 that could result in injury to that person; ~~to:~~

28 (j) A peace officer employed by a local government for the
29 limited purpose of and to the extent necessary:

30 (1) For the investigation of an alleged crime reported by an
31 employee of the pharmacy where the crime was committed; or

32 (2) To carry out a search warrant or subpoena issued
33 pursuant to a court order ~~H~~ ; *or*

34 (k) A county coroner, medical examiner or investigator
35 employed by an office of a county coroner for the purpose of:

36 (1) Identifying a deceased person;

37 (2) Determining a cause of death; or

38 (3) Performing other duties authorized by law.

39 2. Any copy of a prescription for a controlled substance or a
40 dangerous drug as defined in chapter 454 of NRS that is issued to a
41 county coroner, medical examiner or investigator employed by an
42 office of a county coroner must be limited to a copy of the
43 prescription filled or on file for:



(a) The person whose name is on the container of the controlled substance or dangerous drug that is found on or near the body of a deceased person; or

(b) The deceased person whose cause of death is being determined.

3. Except as otherwise provided in NRS 639.2357, any copy of a prescription for a controlled substance or a dangerous drug as defined in chapter 454 of NRS, issued to a person authorized by this section to receive such a copy, must contain all of the information appearing on the original prescription and be clearly marked on its face "Copy, Not Refillable—For Reference Purposes Only." The copy must bear the name or initials of the registered pharmacist who prepared the copy.

4. If a copy of a prescription for any controlled substance or a dangerous drug as defined in chapter 454 of NRS is furnished to the customer, the original prescription must be voided and notations made thereon showing the date and the name of the person to whom the copy was furnished.

5. *The provisions of this section do not prohibit the collection or release of aggregated data concerning prescriptions, provided that the aggregated data cannot be used to identify any patient to whom a prescription was issued or any practitioner who issued a prescription.*

6. As used in this section ~~the~~ "peace" :

(a) *"Contents of prescriptions" includes, without limitation, any information contained in a prescription that can be used to identify:*

(1) The patient for whom the original prescription was issued; and

(2) The practitioner who originally issued the prescription.

(b) "Peace officer" does not include:

~~(a)~~ (1) A member of the Police Department of the Nevada System of Higher Education.

~~(b)~~ (2) A school police officer who is appointed or employed pursuant to NRS 391.100.

Sec. 2. This act becomes effective upon passage and approval.

