



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin Thomas

## Senate Approves Bill to Limit ‘Virtual Verification’ of Prescriptions at Pharmacies

KEVIN THOMAS June 9, 2021

| ISSUE: **PHARMACY, PRESCRIBED DRUGS OR PRESCRIPTIONS, VIRTUAL VERIFICATION**

| COMMITTEE: **CONSUMER PROTECTION**



(Albany, NY) — Senator Kevin Thomas, Chairman of the Consumer Protection Committee, today announced the passage of legislation (S5722/Thomas) to address growing concern over the potentially dangerous implications of “virtual verification” in pharmacies.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Cuomo issued executive order 202.1, authorizing pharmacies to use virtual verification of prescriptions. Under this process, a pharmacy technician will pull, count, scan any applicable bar codes on medication bottles, take a picture of the medication being dispensed on an imaging device, and then proceed to cap, bag, and staple the prescription. The licensed pharmacist is expected to remotely verify

the drug by examining the photo, which is often of low quality, after which the prescription is given to the patient. Without physical verification by a licensed pharmacist, this process carries a high risk for medication errors, whose consequences can be devastating.

Senator Kevin Thomas said, “Patient safety should always be top priority. Virtual verification carries far too much risk for error, and puts an undue burden on our pharmacists and pharmacy techs. That is why, as Chair of Consumer Protection, I have introduced this legislation, which prohibits critical steps in the pharmaceutical dispensing process and final product verification from being subject to virtual verification. I thank my Senate colleagues for supporting this bill, which protects both consumers and our pharmacy workers, who have and continue to do a heroic job during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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## 2021-S5722

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- Introduced
  - - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate
  - - On Floor Calendar Assembly
    - On Floor Calendar Senate
  - - Passed Assembly
    - Passed Senate
  - Delivered to Governor
  - Signed By Governor
  -

**Restricts certain practices from remote supervision by licensed pharmacists**

March 17, 2021

In Senate Committee [Higher Education](#)

Sponsored by [Kevin Thomas](#)

Do you support this bill?