

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA  
LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS

BILL NUMBER: AB 1587  
AUTHOR: Ta  
BILL DATE: March 18, 2026, Amended  
SUBJECT: Prescription Drugs for Life-Threatening Conditions  
SPONSOR: Author  
POSITION: Neutral

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT LEGISLATION:

Clarifies existing law to state that a pharmacist who refills a medication for a patient whose prescriber is unavailable to authorize the refill shall inform the prescriber within a reasonable time if a prescriber is identified.

BACKGROUND

[Article 3 of Chapter 9 of Division 2 of Business and Profession Code \(BPC\)](#) generally provides for the scope of practice that authorizes a pharmacist to perform their duties. [BPC section 4050\(c\)](#) states that “[p]harmacist practice is a dynamic, patient-oriented health service that applies a scientific body of knowledge to improve and promote patient health by means of patient-care activities to optimize appropriate drug use, drug-related therapy, disease management and prevention, and communication for clinical and consultative purposes. Pharmacists and pharmacies in this state are licensed and regulated by the California State Board of Pharmacy (BOP).

[BPC section 4064](#) authorizes a pharmacist to refill a prescription for medication without the prescriber’s authorization if the prescriber is unavailable to authorize the refill and if, in the pharmacist’s professional judgment, failure to refill the prescription might interrupt the patient’s ongoing care and have a significant adverse effect on the patient’s well-being.

ANALYSIS

According to the author (as indicated in the analysis prepared by the Assembly Committee on Business and Professions):

“Delays in care should not place patients in a position where they need to ration life-saving medication as they seek continued care. AB 1587 ensures that patients who undergo a transition between doctors or insurance coverage can have a previously established prescription refilled by the pharmacist. This bill will buy precious time for patients whose lives rely on this medication.”

### **Consideration of a Board Position**

This legislation updates the authority of pharmacists to refill medications and is within the jurisdiction of the BOP. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board do not take a position on AB 1587.

FISCAL: None identified.

SUPPORT: None identified.

OPPOSITION: None identified.

POSITION: Recommendation: No position recommended.

ATTACHMENT: [AB 1587, Ta. Prescription Drugs for Life-Threatening Conditions.](#)  
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