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Rep. Gallop Franklin's Bill to Enlist Pharmacists in the Battle Against HIV Makes Progress in the Florida House

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – The Florida House Health and Human Services Committee today unanimously passed [CS/HB 159](#) sponsored by [Representative Gallop Franklin \(D-Tallahassee\)](#) to apply pharmacists' talents to prevent the spread of HIV in Florida. Rep. Franklin's proposal authorizes pharmacists to work together with physicians to help adults exposed to HIV quickly receive potentially life-saving medication.

Representative Franklin's proposal would give pharmacists the green light to screen for HIV exposure, dispense HIV-Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) medication prescribed by a licensed health care practitioner, and advise that recipients consult with a physician.

"In Florida, HIV is a public-health crisis. We know in battling HIV, speed can save lives," **Representative Franklin** said. "When a person is exposed to HIV, there's a 72-hour window to get medication to prevent infection. Allowing neighborhood pharmacists to offer this service reduces delay and brings the care closer to where and when it's needed most."

Representative Franklin noted that often, people can't get in to see a physician within 72 hours of exposure to the virus. Allowing pharmacists, working with physicians, to offer PEP treatment closes the gap and saves lives.

Florida Department of Health [data for 2022](#) shows there were nearly 125,000 people across the state living with the HIV. According to the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control](#), in 2021 Florida's HIV infection rate stood at 21.7 per 100,000 people, among the highest HIV infection rates in the country.

Representative Franklin's HIV-PEP legislation is now positioned for

consideration by the entire Florida House of Representatives. The Florida Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services on Tuesday passed the HIV-PEP companion bill ([CS/CS/SB 1320](#)). Sponsored by [Senator Alexis Calatayud](#), (R-Miami), the bill's next scheduled stop is in the Senate Rules Committee.

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