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TESTIMONY OF JENNIFER STEPHENS, ZOOMCARE, ON SB 8  
To The  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE AND HUMAN SERVICES  
February 4, 2013

Chair Monnes Anderson and Senate Committee Members

My name is Jennifer Stephens. I have a Masters in Nursing from OHSU and am a family nurse practitioner.

Becoming a family nurse practitioner requires the minimum of a 2-year masters' level program, which OHSU offers. This program consists of both in-classroom and clinical experience. As part of the in-classroom curriculum, I was required to attend 2 terms of advanced pharmacology, which provided us with in-depth education on specific medications we would be prescribing, including the indications, adverse reactions, medication interactions and other vital information for these medications. All of this information is also critical when dispensing medications, knowledge that a nurse practitioner graduates with and is prepared to use.

I currently work for ZoomCare at the newly established Salem clinic, located on South Commercial Street. Our practice has nurse practitioners, physicians and physician's assistants working together to provide care to our communities. We all serve in the same care model, including the dispensing of medications by the physicians and physician's assistants.

I have seen firsthand how dispensing of medications by the physicians and physician's assistants have helped with our patients' care. Providing patients with basic medications, such as antibiotics for common illnesses and anti-inflammatories for pain relief, has improved our patient care. The convenience of this not only makes it easier on patients but ensures that they get prompt treatment. Many patients wait a day or two before starting their medications because they do not feel well enough to get to a pharmacy. This not only causes the patient to suffer needlessly from symptoms that are not treated efficiently but it also potentially causes the patient's symptoms to get worse when they are left untreated for longer than expected.

Allowing nurse practitioners to dispense through Senate Bill 8 would alleviate this concern for our patients and potentially reduce the overall health costs of infections and injuries that do not get prompt medicinal treatment. Thank you for your consideration on this bill.