



*February 18, 2013*

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Senator Laurie Monnes-Anderson, Chair

Senator Jeff Kruse, Vice-Chair

Senator Tim Knopp

Senator Chip Shields

Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward

Chair Monnes-Anderson and members of the Committee,

The Oregon Society of Physician Assistants (OSPA) seeks to promote quality, cost effective, and accessible health care; to support the professional and personal development of Physician Assistants; and to advance the PA profession as well as the PA/MD team approach to health care.

With those goals in mind, OSPA supports legislation aimed at putting the provider and patient back in charge of the patient's health care. Senate Bill 163 would increase access to medications, decrease administrative burden on providers, and, we believe, decrease the overall cost of health care by speeding up the process for treating ailments.

While OSPA understands the goals of fail-first step therapy – to keep health care costs down by making sure the patient is prescribed the effective drug with the lowest cost– there are cases where a mandated fail-first step may cause more harm than good. Step therapy requirements interfere with the provider-patient relationship by enabling payers (insurance companies) to override a provider's care decisions, which are made based on clinical judgment and knowledge of the patient.

OSPA supports the goal of SB 163, which is to limit the number of therapies or pain medications the prescribing provider must test before ultimately prescribing the pain medication they believe will meet their patients' needs.

OSPA urges the committee to consider this legislation, which we believe will save resources and time for our health care system.