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Center for Public Health Practice

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TO: The Honorable Senator Monnes Anderson, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health Care and Human Services

FROM: Lorraine Duncan  
Oregon Immunization Program Manager  
Public Health Division  
Oregon Health Authority

SUBJECT: SB 132

Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lorraine Duncan, the Oregon Immunization Program Manager in the Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division. I am here today to provide answers to questions on Senate Bill 132.

1. What is the current rate and trend of non-medical immunization exemptions in Oregon?

For the last decade, Oregon's non-medical exemption to school immunization rate for kindergartners has steadily increased from less than 2 percent in 2001 to 5.8 percent in 2012 (see graph). In some counties, the rate of non-medical exemption is as high as 12 percent (see map). Oregon now has the highest non-medical exemption rate for one or more immunizations in the United States. Some Oregon schools have very high exemption rates up to 70 percent. We worry that these schools are vulnerable to outbreaks of disease. For example, a school needs a 94 percent immunization rate to keep the measles virus from spreading. By keeping schools healthy and safe from disease, immunizations support early learning and educational objectives.

2. What will the educational module look like?

Parents can view an internet-based vaccine educational video at no cost. For easy access, the internet-based video will be available on-demand, 24 hours a day, in a variety of languages. For parents with no personal internet access, libraries or other community venues will be available. Alternative formats, such as a booklet or audio tape, will also be available upon request. The video will be interactive, similar to the format of the videos found at this link: <http://healthoregon.org/vfctraining> . Information presented will be approximately at the 7th grade reading level. In development of the video, we will request input from parents, including those who have non-medical exemptions for their children.

The video will include an overview of approximately 15-20 minutes discussing the most common questions and concerns about immunizations. Short 2-5 minutes segments for each school-required vaccine will be available. Parents will select the video segments about the specific vaccines for which they would like to claim an exemption. These short videos will discuss the diseases the vaccine prevents and common questions about the specific vaccine. After the parent completes the educational videos for the vaccines of their choosing, the parent will be able to print a certificate showing these vaccines as documentation for a non-medical exemption.

### 3. Speak to the rule making process, specifically the definition for "health care practitioner."

The process for making and amending administrative rules includes notification of interested parties and providing opportunity for public input before rules are finalized. Interested parties may provide comments about draft rules at a public hearing or in writing. All comments received will be considered and responded to before rules are finalized. Draft rules and information about how to provide comments are posted on our website. Anyone may comment on draft rules, and we will send notification to interested parties including medical providers that give immunizations. If an individual would like to receive notification about immunization-related rule changes, that person may contact the Oregon Immunization Program at 971-673-0300.

Oregon Administrative Rule 333-050-0030(11) currently states, " 'Health Care Practitioner' means a practitioner of the healing arts who has within the scope of the practitioner's license, the authority to order immunizations, to include: M.D., D.O., licensed nurse practitioners with prescription writing privileges, and licensed physicians' assistants with prescription writing privileges who are working under the sponsorship of an M.D., D.O., or a registered nurse working under the direction of an M.D. or a D.O."

In the current administrative rules, health care practitioners can document that a child has received immunizations for school attendance or for an exemption to school immunization requirements based on immunity, such as diagnosis of history of a vaccine-preventable disease. Senate Bill 132 would allow health care practitioners to provide documentation for a non-medical exemption after providing information to a parent about the risks and benefits of immunization, consistent with information published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Thank you for allowing me to answer questions about Senate Bill 132. There is no fiscal impact to the Immunization Program. If there are further questions, I will be happy to be a resource to the committee.



