



February 26, 2013

Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson  
900 Court St, NE S-413  
Salem, OR 97301

Senator Jackie Winters  
900 Court St. NE, S-301  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Monnes Anderson and Senator Winters,

As the CEO of the Colon Cancer Alliance (CCA), I am writing today in strong support of SB 460, which ensures patient safety when it comes to biosimilar substitution in Oregon. CCA is the oldest and largest national patient advocacy group in America dedicated to colorectal cancer, we are also an active member of the Alliance for Safe Biologic Medicines (ASBM), an organization dedicated to ensuring that patients are at the forefront of the biosimilar policy discussion. Since the FDA was given the authority to bring biosimilars to patients in the U.S., CCA and ASBM have supported their efforts to establish an approval pathway and we support your legislation promoting patient safety.

CCA represents cancer patients whose lives depend on access to these biologic medicines and I enthusiastically support this safety-focused bill. Both patients and physicians deserve to know when a life-saving medicine the patient is taking has been switched to a different medicine. It's common sense. Patients entrust their care to their physician and if a physician isn't aware of what their patient is taking, they will not be able to do their job, which in the case of many cancer patients, could mean their life.

I recently spoke at a conference in Dallas, TX where a stage 4 colon cancer patient made the point that he is the boss of his healthcare. This patient works with his team of doctors to make the best decisions about the treatments and care he should receive. However, if patients and their physicians do not know what medicines they are taking, they can't make the right decisions; they deserve to know when a biologic that has been working to keep them alive is being substituted, especially until we learn more about biosimilars.

We agree that when interchangeable biosimilar products are substituted, communication among patients, pharmacists, and health care providers is essential to patient care. Opponents of the bill suggest that its provisions are onerous and intended to prevent the substitution of biosimilars from occurring, however, the

physician notification requirement does not kick in after until the substitution has occurred. Physicians and pharmacists work together on a daily basis to ensure their patients are receiving proper care, and there is no reason why dealing with highly complex, next generation medicines should be any different.

Biologics are highly complex, advanced prescription medicines made from living cells and the biosimilars that aim to replicate them, are similar, but not the exact same. Biosimilars are not generics and even the slightest difference in the biosimilar can have a significant impact on a patient.

Thank you for your leadership to make patient safety a priority in Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Spiegel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Andrew Spiegel, CEO  
Colon Cancer Alliance