

ELIZABETH STEINER HAYWARD MD
STATE SENATOR



From the Desk of
Senator
Steiner Hayward

OREGON STATE SENATE
DISTRICT 17

Support SB 470-A
21 March 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Unintentional prescription drug-related death rates in Oregon have increased 240% from 2000 to 2011. However, these deaths should be easily preventable. One way to prevent these unintentional overdoses is to raise awareness about the risk and keep physicians up to date on high-risk, high-dose prescriptions their patient may be taking.

An important step in saving lives is utilizing the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program. The Prescription Drug Monitoring Program has been operational for the past 18 months. It provides an incredible tool for providers as they prescribe medications that are subject to possible abuse pose a high risk for overdose deaths. **The biggest obstacle in using PDMP to save lives is that not enough doctors choose to use it.** The changes to the PDMP in SB 470-A will allow for improved use of the program. It will lead to better information for providers so they can better understand prescribing trends, provide higher quality care, and protect the safety of their patients.

The data in the PDMP is very private and well-protected. Only medical staff providing care for the patient will have access to the data. In the 18 months this program has been operational, there has never been a data breach. Our protection law is one of the tightest of any Prescription Drug Monitoring Program in the nation. Law enforcement may not get access to data without a court order showing probable cause, a very high threshold. The purpose of PDMP is not to voyeuristically monitor private medical information or catch addicts so we can put them in jail. **This bill is about patient safety, first and foremost.**

Prescription drug overdose deaths are an epidemic in this state. If people in Oregon were dying from an infectious disease at the rate that they are dying of prescription drug overdoses, we would be doing everything we could to inform physicians of how they can stop the spread and save lives. That is precisely what the PDMP and SB 470-A intend to do.

Please vote Aye on SB 470-A so that the PDMP can be a more useful tool in saving lives of Oregonians.

My best,

Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, MD

