



Before the House Committee on Health Care
Support for HB 2294 –Health Information Technology

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Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of House Bill 2294 on behalf of Kaiser Permanente. Kaiser Permanente is an integrated health system that serves approximately 500,000 members in the Northwest. We were one of the first to implement a robust electronic medical record system, which is a core component of our ability to coordinate care. Whether a member visits his or her primary care provider, the emergency room, the pharmacy, or calls our regional telephonic medical center, all of our providers have access to and are linked by the electronic medical record. Patients also have access—through their online medical record, they can order prescription refills, see test results, and even view their provider’s chart notes.

Our electronic medical record system has been critical not just for linking providers and coordinating care, but also for understanding the populations we serve. We can identify trends, track interventions that are working or not working, and target future quality improvement efforts in a way that is unmatched with other data. As health system transformation evolves, health information technology (IT) will be critical for gauging how systems are performing.

We support HB 2294 for three reasons. First, the bill directs that the state’s health IT program should support the goals of health system transformation. Beyond sharing medical records, this includes work to improve health outcomes, promote accountability and transparency, and support payment reform and new payment models.

Second, HB 2294 will create a point of accountability for this work under the Oregon Health Policy Board, ensuring that the state’s health information technology efforts are tied to the board’s strategic objectives and to the state’s broader health system transformation goals.

Third, HB 2294 allows the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to participate in collaborative work already occurring on the ground, and provides a funding mechanism to support their involvement. It’s important to note that the funding mechanism is a user fee. Funding efforts through user fees will ensure that OHA’s efforts are focused on initiatives for which there is need and demand. This will ensure the state’s efforts compliment, rather than conflict, with work already occurring on the ground.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 2294. We look forward to partnering with OHA as they advance their health IT program. We urge the committee to support this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions.