

Representative Greenlick,

There is a matter before the House Health Care Committee about which I feel extremely passionate. On Wednesday, your committee is set to hear testimony on H.B. 2421, which, among other things, would remove the exclusion of medications used to treat mental illnesses from the Practitioner-managed Prescription Drug Plan. In effect, this would create a somewhat arbitrary list of what are thought to be the most cost-effective treatments, and restrict insurance coverage of all medications not on this list.

I volunteer with the Lane County division of the National Alliance on Mental Illness; I regularly see many members of our mental health community, both consumers and providers. Every single one of these people that I have told about H.B. 2421 has been vehemently against the bill. Several have relatives that, after years, are *still* in the process of finding a treatment that works for them; some (including my own father) have been treated successfully for decades, only to find out that their medication has begun to degrade their bodies and that they must switch to a new drug; others have loved ones that have not yet accepted that they should even *seek* treatment, in the first place. For all of these people, adding another barrier one must break through in order to receive treatment will have potentially catastrophic results. Whether it's the person trying to find the right medication, someone like my father--- who, after years and years, must switch to a new prescription--- or the person that (hopefully) will eventually realize they need help, making it more difficult for any of these people to seek and receive treatment can very easily lead them into crisis, institutionalization, and even suicide.

H.B. 2421 would cause great harm and hardship to Oregonians that *already* carry some of the toughest burdens imaginable. What could possibly be worth causing this? Please, do not let H.B. 2421 leave your committee.

Thank you very much for your time,
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