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Senate Committee on Health Care
SB 147

On behalf of Walgreens 87 stores and nearly 2,000 employees in Oregon, I respectfully ask you to oppose SB 147 that would impose special notification requirements on pharmacist substitution of interchangeable biological products.

Walgreens supports patient access to biological products and maintains the position that Oregon law for the substitution of interchangeable biosimilars mirror current substitution laws for generic drugs.

Current Substitution Practices Can Safely and Effectively Apply to Biological Products

As a result of the Federal Drug Administration's (FDA) rigorous standards and existing state protections, states can be comfortable that biosimilars deemed interchangeable can be substituted without the need for additional prescriber intervention, as specified in federal law.

Today, physicians have the ability to prevent substitution through the indication of "Dispense as Written" on any prescription. Further, pharmacists are required by law to notify patients of a substitution orally and in writing, and patients have the right to refuse a substitution. This process is simple and effective, and should be used with the dispensing of biological products.

Biosimilars Cost Savings

Similar to generic drugs, biosimilars have the potential to generate significant savings for consumers and the healthcare system. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the usage of biosimilars will reduce U.S. healthcare expenditures by \$25 billion over a ten-year period. According to the nonprofit, nonpartisan Rand Corporation, annual spending on biologics has grown three times faster than spending on other prescription medications. Rand estimates the introduction of biosimilars could save \$44.2 billion in drug spending over a 10-year period. Those savings will be put in jeopardy by increasing the cost of doing business and requiring unnecessary prescriber notification by pharmacies.

Thank you for your consideration and I ask that you vote against SB 147.

Sincerely,

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