



To: Members of the Senate Health Care Committee

From: Kevin Campbell, Executive Director
Oregon Association Chiefs of Police

Date: April 1st, 2015

Re: Testimony in Favor of SB 661

Chair Monnes Anderson and members of the Senate Health Care Committee, my name is Kevin Campbell and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police. I am here today on behalf of the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police in support of SB 661.

Oregon, like much of the nation, is fighting an opiate crisis in which opioids are being crushed, melted, and smoked to get a quick “high.” This prescription drug abuse epidemic is responsible for killing more than 16,000 Americans every year. From a law enforcement perspective, Opioid abuse continues to be a significant public safety challenge that demands a thoughtful and multi-pronged response. The growing number of overdose deaths from Opioid abuse is the tragic and unacceptable result of this abuse epidemic. In response to the threat of overdose, a growing number of law enforcement agencies are deploying the use of naloxone hydrochloride, an opioid antagonist that can successfully reverse the respiratory depression caused by overdoses of opioids (including heroin). While use of naloxone by trained law enforcement officers is an important tool to prevent the loss of life due to overdose, it remains a “bottom of the cliff” strategy.

While we are not able to speak to the economics considerations within SB 661, we do believe that Abuse Deterrent Formulations (ADF) can play a valuable role in reducing the abuse potential of these drugs by allowing doctors to prescribe these ADF products without having to first prescribe an opioid without abuse deterrent properties and by controlling the cost to the patient when these products are prescribed. Abuse-deterrent opioids contain physical and chemical properties that prevent chewing, crushing, grating, grinding, or extracting, or contain another substance that reduces the euphoria.

Recognizing the potential that abuse-deterrent opioids have in helping to combat the drug abuse epidemic, the FDA has made the development of this technology a priority. We believe that SB 661 is important, but we also call on the legislature to address the overprescribing of schedule II medications for the majority of patients when they have trauma or surgical procedures and the practice of prescribing Opioids for chronic non-cancer pain. While we understand that addressing prescribing practices is challenging, we believe that the growing human and public safety impacts of opioid abuse demands attention and action.

Thank you for consideration.