



In Support of Oregon House Bill 3200

March 25, 2015

Position: The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufactures of America (PhRMA) supports Oregon House Bill 3200, which prohibits a health insurance provider from discriminating against patients 65 and older.

PhRMA and its member companies strongly oppose discrimination based on age, expected length of life, diagnosis, degree of medical dependency, or quality of life. This legislation protects patients by ensuring that if a physician prescribes a treatment for a patient an insurer cannot deny treatment to prevent death on the basis of age.

The intent of HB 3200 is to protect those 65 and older from policies that place cost over care. When both a doctor and patient agree that treatment is in the patient's best interest – no bureaucratic policy or health insurance plan should be permitted to deny a patient's right to treatment.

This legislation also underlines the importance of upholding and deferring to the “doctor/patient relationship” when the provider and patient deem it necessary for a patient to have access to innovative treatments. Only a physician with access to a patient's entire health and overall wellness history is capable of making a fully informed treatment decision. HB 3200 ensures that healthcare providers, not bureaucrats, are making treatment decisions.

In October of 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics reported the average length of life for American's has risen to an all-time high of 78.7 years. Those 65 and older may have long, productive lives ahead of them and deserve access to life-saving treatments deemed appropriate by their physicians. HB 3200 ensures those 65 and older will continue to be able to rely on innovative treatments to extend and enhance their lives.

Patients should not be denied access to innovative treatments and forced to accept only palliative or no care because of a health plan has deemed them unworthy of treatment. Generally, those who are 65 and older are likely to respond well to treatment which makes the protections in HB 3200 necessary. This legislation will allow clinical decision-making to rightly remain in the hands of healthcare providers. Furthermore, HB 3200 will ensure that those 65 and older diagnosed with a terminal illness will have access to therapeutic regimens that they need, regardless of age.

For these reasons, PhRMA urges Oregon legislators to support HB 3200.