

From the Desk of Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward



Oregon Academy
of Family Physicians



June 24, 2015

Please Support Access to Birth Control without a Health Care Practitioner's Prescription

Oregon has the opportunity to lead the nation in passing a historic expansion of access to birth control. HB 2879 will remove barriers to birth control by allowing women to purchase oral and patch hormonal contraceptives without a previous visit with a health care provider.

Studies have shown that requiring a health care practitioner's prescription can be an obstacle for many women especially those in lower socioeconomic conditions. Removing this barrier can reduce unintended pregnancies by up to 25%. Further, there is substantial scientific research and data showing that over-the-counter access to oral contraceptives is safe. Studies reveal that women are able to self-screen for contraindications as well as health care providers – making a previous visit with a health care provider unnecessary for most women.

It is important to note that this legislation assures that state and federal law regarding insurance coverage of contraceptives applies equally to prescriptions initially written by a pharmacist just like other medical professionals with contraceptive prescribing authority.

In addition to the members of the legislative work group (which included all physician lawmakers), there is broad consensus within the medical community on this issue. There is consistent agreement that this policy is what is best for women's health in the 21st century by increasing access, providing more choice and lowering the cost of healthcare. This legislation will have a profound and positive impact on our state.

Please support HB 2879.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Knute Buehler".

Representative Knute Buehler
House District 54