Representative Mitch Greenlick, Chair House Committee on Health Care
State Capitol
900 Court Street, NE, Room H-492
Salem, OR 97301
February 6, 2016

Re: Support for Oregon House Bill 4105

Dear Chairman Greenlick:

Currently, there are more than 100 million Americans who suffer from chronic pain, a number of whom reside within the state of Oregon. U.S. Pain Foundation is a nonprofit organization created by people with pain for people with pain. We connect, inform and empower the pain community while advocating on behalf of the entire pain community, caregivers and healthcare providers. With 1 in 3 adult Americans living with some form of chronic pain, the U.S. Pain Foundation respectfully urges you to support HB 4105, which includes prescriber communication.

We applaud the cost benefits that might occur from biosimilars; however, substituting a biosimilar or an interchangeable biological product without informing the prescriber could be detrimental to patient safety. This is why we support HB 4105 which ensures beneficial communications take place between the pharmacist and prescriber. Biosimilars are biological medicines that are produced by living cells for the prevention, treatment, or cure of a disease. The U.S. Pain Foundation supports strong patient protections and transparency relative to state legislation for substitution of biosimilars, such as HB 4105. By securing effective biosimilar substitution laws, Oregon can increase access to this new age of medicines and do so in a safe, reliable and consistent manner for patients and physicians.

Treatment of chronic pain requires a great deal of clinical judgment. Sometimes treatments that work for one patient with a chronic disease will not work for another. The physician must take into consideration the needs of each individual patient, factoring in many different variables that can affect a patient's treatment options. Therefore, inappropriate therapy substitutions can result in disease progression and long-term consequences. Since biosimilars differ from generics, they are not identical to their biologic counterpart. While generics can be interchanged for a brand-name drug because their basic compounds are matching, biologics and biosimilars are not identical and should be treated as such. It is feasible that a patient could have a different reaction to a biosimilar than he/she would with its original biologic.

Given the importance of the specific needs of each individual patient and the distinct differences between biologics and biosimilars, we believe that communication between pharmacists and physicians is *crucial* to patient care to ensure that patients are receiving the best treatment as prescribed by their physicians. The organization is pleased to see this legislation not only includes a communication process between pharmacists and prescribers, but defines that an interchangeable biological drug product must be approved by the FDA and therapeutically equivalent to the prescribing medication.

On behalf of the chronic pain patients of Oregon, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation. U.S. Pain Foundation strongly urges you to support HB 4105, which includes prescriber communication and helps to protect patient safety. Please contact Shaina Smith should you require any additional information or clarification. Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Shaina Smith
Director of State Advocacy & Alliance Development
U.S. Pain Foundation, Inc.

CC: Representative Rob Nosse, Vice Chair, Representative Cedric Hayden, Vice Chair, Representative Knute Buehler
Representative Brian Clem, Representative Mitch Greenlick, Representative Bill Kenneme , Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer
Representative John Lively, Representative Jim Weidner

info@uspainfoundation.org **Main: (800) 910.2462** **670 Newfield Street, Suite B**
www.uspainfoundation.org **Fax: (800) 929 -4062** **Middletown, CT 06457**