



Testimony in Support of HB 2387

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Chair Greenlick and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2387. The Oregon Nurses Association is dedicated to finding solutions to address the fast rising costs of pharmaceutical products that is both straining our health care system and limiting patient access to vital care and treatment options.

Prescription drug prices are one of the fastest growing cost drivers of the health care system and Oregonians are shouldering the burden. Patients today are paying more at the pharmacy, and consumers experience higher insurance premiums, while employers have to cut benefits and state budgets are burdened by high drug prices.

In Oregon under the legislature's leadership, we've been engaged in a continuing process of reshaping our health care system to deliver improved outcomes, enhanced quality of care and reduced costs. As part of this, our state has been maintaining a public health care rate of growth at 3.4% a year. However, the growing cost of prescription drugs is burdening public and private health care budgets across the state. Unaffordable and unpredictable prescription drug prices impact everyone.

Brand name drug prices have grown five times faster than the 3.4% annual growth for Medicaid. Specialty drugs have increased even more. Similarly, cities, counties, school districts and public safety budgets are feeling the squeeze of skyrocketing price increases for older drugs that have been on the market for years, as well as new high-priced specialty drugs like those for Hepatitis C.

These examples are not stand alone instances. Between 2008 and 2015, there was a 1000% increase for more than 400 generic drugs¹. And over the past two years, there has been a 53% increase in brand name prescription drug prices for the Oregon Health Plan².

House bill 2387 represents an important step toward addressing high drug prices in our state. This is a comprehensive policy approach that will provide immediate and real protection to consumers from dramatic cost increases and allow patients more predictability and sustainability without hindering access to life-saving medication.

Oregon patients and families cannot wait for relief. We need a comprehensive approach that reduces out of pocket costs now, increases pharmaceutical transparency and curbs rampant price increases. **ONA urges your support for HB 2387.**

¹ "Study: Prices Of More Than 400 Drugs Have Skyrocketed In Past Few Years"

<http://pittsburgh.cbslocal.com/2016/09/20/study-prices-of-more-than-400-drugs-have-skyrocketed-in-past-few-years/>

² "Pharmacy Cost", Oregon Health Authority fact sheet on Medicaid prescription drug prices, October 2016.

