



March 9, 2017

To: Senate Committee on Health Care
From: Health Care for All Oregon
RE: Support of SB 792 and SB 793

Dear Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee:

Health Care for All Oregon (HCAO) supports SB 792 and SB 793 as a step towards transparency in prescription drug pricing.

Health Care for All Oregon is a statewide coalition of 120 organizations and nearly 20,000 health care advocates dedicated to the creation of universal, affordable, equitable, publicly funded healthcare in Oregon. Until we reach that ideal, we support efforts to increase access, reduce cost and improve the efficacy of healthcare in Oregon.

Prescription drug prices are one of the fastest growing cost drivers of the health care in both Oregon and the nation. Patients are paying more at the pharmacy, consumers have higher insurance premiums because insurers are paying more, employers have to cut benefits and state budgets are suffering.

In Oregon, we have been changing portions of our health care system for better health and better care, with some attempts to control costs. As part of that, we are keeping Oregon Health plan per member rate of growth to 3.4% a year. But the high price of prescription drugs is threatening every health care budget in the state--public and private. Regardless of what changes occur at the federal level, Oregon as a state must do what it can to get a handle on this now. Unaffordable and unpredictable prescription drug prices affect everyone.

While HCAO is pushing for more fundamental changes in the financing of health care in Oregon, especially in moving away from treating health care as a market commodity that people can freely choose to purchase or not purchase, we support efforts to help people afford health care within in the current system. SB 792 and SB 793 can help with affordability by making drug prices more transparent and by holding manufacturers accountable for unjustifiable price increases.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and we look forward to continuing to work with you as we move towards the legislative goal of universal health care in Oregon.

Charlie Swanson, legislative committee chair of HCAO

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Mission

To work for an equitable, affordable, comprehensive, high quality, publicly funded universal healthcare system serving everyone in Oregon and the United States.