



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Chair Monnes-Anderson, members of the committee, for the record my name is Sheri Malstrom, State Representative for Oregon HD 27, which includes Beaverton and SW Portland. Today, I am here in support of House Bill 2644A.

HB 2644A comes to you from the House Health Care Committee with a unanimous do pass recommendation, and from the House floor with only a single no vote. This bill would update Oregon Statute, requiring that Vitamin K be administered to newborn infants by the most effective means available. Before discussing the importance of Vitamin K, it is important to note that this bill includes an opt-out for parents that do not want their newborn children to receive Vitamin K—this is not a mandate.

While in committee, Kaiser Permanente sent a succinct letter of support for this bill which sums up the importance of Vitamin K: they write “Vitamin K is a vital medication for newborns and is a required co-factor in the blood clotting process of humans. Vitamin K administered by injection shortly after birth helps prevent catastrophic bleeding in newborns. Without it, blood does not clot appropriately and significant bruising and bleeding can occur with the most innocent of mild traumas to the body. Serious bleeding in newborns often happens in the brain and intestines leading to serious morbidity and mortality.”

It is crucial that infants receive a Vitamin K supplement shortly after delivery. While you and I benefit from the vitamins in our diets, newborns haven’t developed the intestinal bacteria that supplies Vitamin K, and are at an increased risk for the first few days of life. This is a good, simple bill and I urge your support.