

Letter in Support of HB4143

February 5, 2018

Chair Greenlick and members of the committee:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak in support of HB4143. My name is Amy Kerfoot. I am a board-certified Occupational Medicine physician for Northwest Permanente, the medical group for Kaiser Permanente. I have the privilege of serving on Governor Brown's Opioid Epidemic Task Force.

I was born and raised in Redmond, Oregon, and am grateful every day that I call the Northwest home. In addition to my practice at Permanente, I am a physician in the Oregon Army National Guard Medical Command.

As an occupational medicine specialist, it's my job to help members return to meaningful work after job-related illnesses or injuries. During my residency, I became involved in regional efforts to address the opioid epidemic, through clinical practice guidelines and through coordinated policy efforts to expand access to medication-assisted treatment.

The work of the Governor's task force has been productive, but there is so much more to be done. This bill provides the Legislature with some important first steps:

- We strongly support studying barriers to medication-assisted treatment, so that we can come back to you in 2019 with a plan to increase access to this effective, life-saving strategy for treatment and recovery.
- I'm excited about the pilot project to place peer recovery support mentors in emergency departments. Kaiser Permanente supports the addition of Washington and Clackamas Counties, as we are a regional, integrated system with hospitals located in those two counties.
- Our organization is very committed to supporting meaningful strategies to promote treatment and recovery. We'd like to participate in early efforts like this pilot, as we are uniquely suited given our integrated system and longstanding efforts to reduce opioid misuse.

- I am hopeful that this bill will provide a pathway toward developing a “hub and spoke” system for treatment and recovery, similar to successful models in Rhode Island and other states.
- Requiring practitioners to register with the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program is another important step in the right direction. While there are challenges for health care systems and for providers to get the technology and workflows figured out, I see the PDMP as a powerful tool to help providers rethink prescribing decisions that had been automatic in the past, but maybe should not have been for many patients.

Thank you for supporting the Task Force’s recommended first steps to move Oregon toward a healthier future.