

February 20, 2018

The Honorable Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
The Honorable David Gomberg, Co-Chair
Subcommittee on Transportation & Economic
Development
Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Opposition to HB 4005

Dear Senator Johnson and Representative Gomberg,

As strong patient advocates who are committed to expanding access and affordability of prescription medication, we are writing to express our opposition to HB 4005. The bill, promoted as a way to reduce drug prices, will do nothing to directly benefit patients struggling to manage the cost of treatment.

We share the widespread dissatisfaction with the price of drugs, and we believe there are transparency measures that make sense. HB 4005, however, requires disclosure on only one piece of the supply chain when there are many other factors that impact price: Pharmacy Benefit Managers, insurance actuaries, and wholesalers, to name just a few. If the goal of the Legislature is price transparency in the drug supply chain, why enact policy that only impacts one piece of the complex supply chain? It will neither lower prices for consumers nor provide information on what contributes to the cost at the counter.

There are actions the Legislature can take to make a difference for patients, such as enacting policies that actually get at their out-of-pocket costs. Some legislation has been introduced to prohibit insurance carriers from changing drug coverage for a patient during a calendar year, which happens frequently and creates extreme challenges for people on fixed incomes. Requiring insurers to have a co-pay only product is another way to ensure patients can manage their out-of-pocket costs and plan financially for their medication throughout the year. Unlike HB 4005, these policy proposals will deliver real cost assurances to patients who need access to medication for survival and quality of life.

Reducing the price of drugs and providing predictability to patients are two objectives we all share. If the Legislature is ready to enact meaningful policy to address these issues, you will find no more willing partner than us. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Cc: The Honorable Peter Courtney