



GOOD SAMARITAN
MEDICAL CENTER

Legacy Transplant Services

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January 29, 2019

Representative Mitch Greenlick, Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health Care

Re: HB 2687

Legacy Health is a major nonprofit health care provider serving Oregon and Southwest Washington with seven hospitals and over 119 clinics. Legacy treats more than half a million outpatients annually and admits more than 56,000 people each year to our facilities. Additionally, we operate one of only two transplant centers in the state of Oregon.

Legacy has serious concerns with House Bill 2687, which attempts to legislate unsafe standards of care for transplant medicine. The consequences of marijuana in kidney transplant recipients are well-known and the adverse effects of marijuana have been well characterized in recent publications.¹ Smoking marijuana carries the same risk as smoking tobacco in terms of cardiovascular risk. Furthermore, crude marijuana is unregulated in that the potency and dose are variable and thus do not meet FDA requirements for an approved drug. In immunocompromised hosts, such as transplant recipients, the effect of contaminants or biological material that is eaten or inhaled may pose risks to a transplant recipient. Transplant centers should reserve the right to consider positive drug tests, as we do with other factors such as alcohol or chronic opioid use, within the context of the patient's overall risk-benefit ratio for transplant.

Legacy Health offers the opportunity of transplant to every patient we believe will benefit from it and pride ourselves on considering every patient individually. We do not remove patients from the waiting list exclusively on the basis of being a registry identification card holder as defined in ORS 475B.791 but we do require patients avoid marijuana products that are not regulated by the FDA due to the inherent risks noted above. We request the right to continue to practice medicine that is evidence based and promotes the best possible outcome for the patient and the best possible use of the limited resource of organs.

We urge you not to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William M. Bennett".

William Bennett, MD
Medical Director
Legacy Transplant Services

¹ Volkow ND, Baler RD, Compton WM, Weiss SRB. Adverse health effects of marijuana use. N Engl J Med 2014; 370:2219-2227.