

Date: 01/30/2019

To: The Honorable Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair The Honorable Linthicum, Vice-Chair Members of the Senate Health Care Committee

From: Ann Neilson, Retired Registered Nurse, Madras, OR

RE: Position statement on SB 409, Prescription Drug Importation from Canada

Chair Monnes Anderson, Vice Chair Linthicum and members of the Senate Health Care Committee:

I am here today to ask you to support SB 409, which will allow safe importation of lower-cost prescription medications from Canada for Oregonians like me.

My name is Ann Neilson. I am a retired Registered Nurse from Madras, Oregon and I suffer from Chronic Dry Eye Syndrome. My doctor prescribed Restasis 14 years ago to slow the damage being caused to my eyes. Unfortunately, I cannot take my full dose because it is so expensive.

Restasis is manufactured by the drug company giant Allergan. A full dose of Restasis costs me more than \$2,062 per year out of pocket after our insurance pays \$5,157. I have waited years for it to become more affordable. It is important that I take the drug regularly so that I can keep my corneas healthy. Without proper treatment, my vision could be seriously damaged. My husband must take Xarelto to prevent life-threatening blood clots at a cost of nearly \$5000.00/year. This is in addition to our other prescriptions.

As a nurse, I know there are lots of other stories out there. I discovered scores of patients taking half their prescribed doses or skipping doses due to limited incomes, causing poor health outcomes.

I testified last year to this Legislature in support of HB 4005, the Prescription Drug Pricing Transparency Act, and I'm so glad you listened. Now, I'm here to ask you to take things one step further.

Oregonians need IMMEDIATE relief, and prescription drug importation from Canada will give us that. Last year I started to buy Restasis from Canada, because there it only costs \$1,137 without insurance. That's 1/6 the total U.S. price.

Allergan has already introduced a bill against importation in Oregon, proving they will stop at nothing to protect their profits. Please support legislation that will help Oregonians like me, not billionaire pharmaceutical company CEOs. Thank you.