

Date: 02/19/2019

To: The Honorable Mitch Greenlick, Chair; The Honorable Hayden, Vice-Chair; The Honorable Nosse, Vice-Chair; Members of the House Health Care Committee

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

RE: Support HB 2689 and HB 2658

Chair Greenlick, Vice-Chairs Hayden and Nosse, and members of the House Health Care Committee,

My name is Ann Neilson. I am here today to ask you to support HB 2689 and HB 2658. House Bill 2689 will make safe importation of prescriptions from Canada a reality for people like me. House Bill 2658 would make it so that pharmaceutical companies have to give 60-day advance notice of price increases.

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 and 60-day advance notice of price increases 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.

Please support legislation that will help Oregonians like me, not billionaire pharmaceutical company CEOs. Thank you.