

Re: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 698 and House Bill 2801 (Safe Medication for All Requires Translation)

To Whom It May Concern:

Prescription medications are only effective if you understand how to use them as prescribed. When the instructions are not understood, prescription medications are likely to be less helpful and potentially harmful. I see this legislation as first and foremost as a tool to address a current safety issue. As a pharmacist my first priority is ensuring the safety of my patients and then helping them to use medicine to improve their health. Knowing how to use prescription medicine is fundamental in safe and effective medication management.

I have witnessed time and time again where language barriers and the inability to read a prescription label have directly led to worsening health outcomes and hospital/emergency room visits. Whether it is a parent with limited English proficiency (LEP) who managing a complex seizure medication regimen for their young child or an adult with LEP who is managing a heart failure medicine regimen to control their fluid accumulation, these cases have serious health implications if the medicine regimen is not understood.

The ability to understand instructions of a prescription bottle is often times the last line of defense of ensuring a patient uses their medicine in a safe and effective manner. It can be the difference between successful or unsuccessful management of a health condition. Providing prescription label translation is a step in the right direction into improving equity for the population of Oregonians with limited English proficiency. I support this legislation and know the positive impact it will make in the lives of my patients.

Sincerely,

Justin Bednar, PharmD
Clinical Pharmacist

This testimony reflects my own opinions and not those of my employer.