



Good afternoon Chair Monnes-Anderson, Vice Chair Linthicum and members of the committee. My name is Deborah Riddick. I am the Director of Government Relations for the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). We represent 15,000 registered nurses throughout the state, as well as our member organization, the Nurse Practitioners of Oregon. The ONA supports SB 698, which would require pharmacists to label prescription drugs in language other than English if patient to whom prescription drug is dispensed is person of limited English proficiency.

SB 698's translation requirement, in our opinion, is an obvious solution to a problem that negatively impacts patient outcomes and cost containment. That patients are able read and understand what is prescribed, in a primary language that promotes adherence, addressed the essential medication instruction that nursing practice with fidelity: the right patient; the right medication; the right dose; the right route; the right time.

When patients are unable to understand prescriptions due to a lack of translation, they are less likely to comply with treatment. This delay in treatment increases costs related to disease progression, wasted prescriptions, work-related absences, and additional provider visits. This requirement will facilitate care that is in alignment with the quality improvement that is an essential component of our State's expansion of health care access and CCO 2.0 initiatives.

In addition to the increased costs, SB 698's requirement will address a discriminatory practice that leaves many Oregonians unprotected at a time when they are most vulnerable. If you could remember any illness that you have faced, which was so serious that it required medication, you can also remember what a relief it was to finally be able to regain your health. Now imagine, if that medication was in Swahili or Kaixana or Dumi. Essentially, it's as if your provider evaluated your condition, identified an appropriate treatment, but withheld it from you. Our residents and their communities deserve better. We can do better. We should do better.

To require translation of prescriptions gives every patient the patient-centered care they deserve. It respects the prescribing professional's judgment and patient relationship. It helps to control costs and prevent waste. For these reasons, and many more, we support SB 698 because it aligns with our mission to support quality care and healthy communities in the State of Oregon; we hope it aligns with your vision for the state, as well, and that you will support the bill.