



Senate Committee on Health Care
Re: SB 698 relating to prescription drug labeling

March 6, 2019

Dear Chair Monnes Anderson, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 698. My name is Jenny Lee, and I'm the Advocacy Director for Building Power for Communities of Color, a nonprofit dedicated to policy advocacy for communities of color that will help us achieve a more equitable Oregon.

SB 698 is a critical bill to ensure that patients, providers, and caregivers can more safely and effectively access medical care by requiring pharmacies to provide container labels in both English and a language that the patient can read. Oregonians who have limited English proficiency are generally not able to read the information on their prescription drug containers, presenting a real risk of medication errors that endanger the health and safety of patients.

Our state can work to advance health equity and reduce these dangerous and costly errors by ensuring that pharmacies provide this critical language access. SB 698 will also make sure that patients and caregivers are notified of their rights under federal and state law to receive interpretation when they are speaking with their pharmacist about how to administer their medications.

We also note that Building Power for Communities of Color is coordinating the 2019 Racial Equity Legislative Report, which will analyze racial equity outcomes for the 2019 Oregon Legislature. This report will be used as an educational and advocacy tool to pass policies and make investments that address the priorities of communities of color. The report identifies bills, including SB 698, that have the potential to meaningfully improve opportunities for communities of color for inclusion.

Health equity can only be achieved when all patients receive information about their care in a language they understand. SB 698 will help us reach this goal. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this legislation.

Respectfully,

Jenny Lee
Advocacy Director
Building Power for Communities of Color

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