



Oregon Public Health Association

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May 7, 2019

Dear Chair Salinas, Vice-Chair Hayden, Vice-Chair Nosse, and Members of the Committee,

Please accept this letter on behalf of the Oregon Public Health Association.

We are pleased to support SB 698, which would ensure that patients, providers and caregivers can read and understand medication labels by requiring pharmacies to provide container labels in both English and a language that the patient can read. SB 698 will prevent harmful and costly adverse impacts to the 222,428 Oregonians who have limited English proficiency, who are currently unable to read the directions on their prescription drug containers. If a patient cannot read and thereby understand their healthcare provider's directions as to proper administration of their medication, it makes sense that they have a substantial risk of harmful results. In fact, research shows that the rate of medication errors is twice as high for those with limited English proficiency as those who are able to read their medication container labels.

In addition, SB 698 will ensure that patients and caregivers are aware of their federal and state legal rights to access interpretation when they are speaking with their pharmacist about proper administration of their medications. By requiring appropriate signage at the pharmacy, SB 698 will inform all who come into Oregon pharmacies of their rights.

The Oregon Public Health Association recognizes that health equity is essential to improving the health of all people living in Oregon. We believe that enabling all Oregonians to read and understand their medication labels and understand their pharmacist's directions as to proper administration is an important step to ensuring health equity in our state.

We urge the Committee to approve this important public health legislation and send it to the full House for passage.

Sincerely,

Jessica Nischik-Long, MPH
Executive Director