



February 11, 2020

Dear Rep. Salinas, Vice-Chair Hayden and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon, we would like to share our support for HB 4116, which will provide greater access to HIV preventive medications like PrEP and PEP.

We support the recent work of the Public Health & Formulary Advisory Committee (PHFAC) that has started the process of adopting policy recommendations to allow pharmacists in Oregon to prescribe PrEP and PEP. HB 4116 is a necessary step to increasing access, as it will ensure these policies are as effective as possible. Passage of this bill will ensure Oregon is in alignment with national standards of care.

Medications like PEP and PrEP can prevent HIV infection altogether. Along with the development of life-saving antiretroviral drugs, ending HIV in Oregon is now a real possibility — but only for those who can afford the expense. People who need access to these life-saving medications cannot wait any longer.

In Oregon, pharmacist prescription authority has increased access to oral contraceptives and the availability of other critical medications. Ongoing research indicates that reducing these barriers increases the effectiveness of the intended policy. According to a new study on Oregon's pharmacy prescription authority, access has increased, however: "Ensuring equitable reimbursement for services provided by pharmacists has been key to the uptake of the practice. Data from California, where Medicaid has not reimbursed for pharmacists' counseling and time, demonstrates low availability of services when reimbursement is not assured."¹

HB 4116 ensures that PrEP and PEP are covered medications even at an out-of-network pharmacy, and ensures pharmacists fees associated with providing patient consultations for prescribing medications like PrEP and PEP are reimbursed by insurance companies.

We believe HB 4116 will eliminate barriers to care and save lives. We respectfully ask for your support of this bill.

Thank you,

Christel Allen
Political Director, NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon

¹ Anderson L, Hartung D, Middleton L, Rodriguez MI. Pharmacist provision of hormonal contraception in the Oregon Medicaid Population. *Obstet Gynecol* 2019;133