

Dear House Committee on Human Services,

I appreciate the intention behind HB2348 as a registered dietitian who also chooses to eat more plant based and restrict processed meats. However, having worked with adult hospitalized patients for over 6 years, I have learned that a hospital admission is not the time to enforce healthful behavior change, but instead to encourage behavior change through education and healthy menu options.

Many hospitalized patients are malnourished or at high risk for becoming malnourished often due to poor or reduced appetite and a general disinterest in food. For example, adults with chronic diseases such as liver failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease struggle with decreased appetite and early satiety, often only managing to eat a few bites of food at a time. Due to their chronic conditions, they also have increased calorie and protein demands to provide adequate energy, prevent weight loss, and maintain their quality of life. Any calorie and protein dense food, whether it comes from turkey bacon or peanut butter should and can be utilized to support these goals. Regardless of their diagnosis, patients deserve the right to select what they want to eat.

I wholly support the benefits of a plant forward diet to both improve health outcomes and quality of life. However, instead of a bill that emphasizes restriction during times of critical illness, I would instead support a bill with verbiage around increasing the access of plant-based foods or a public health campaign focused on education to all Oregonians around the value & benefit of a plant-based diet.

Thank you,
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