

My name is Dr. David Coutin and I oppose SB 844.

Senate Committee on Health Care
March 22, 2021

Chairwoman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. David Coutin and I oppose SB 844. I write to you today and urge you to vote no on the establishment of a Prescription Drug Affordability Board.

I am a life-long medical professional. I had the privilege of starting my career in pediatrics specializing in allergy and immunology in the state of California and then approximately 30 years as an allergist in central Oregon. I also previously served as a member of the Central Oregon Medical Society. Throughout my career, I have always been a strong advocate for fair health care reforms.

Further, as a doctor who has prescribed treatments to hundreds of patients, I cannot stress enough that price caps do not lower the cost of prescription drugs at the pharmacy counter for the overwhelming majority of patients.

However, price caps do put access to medications in jeopardy and, if passed, this bill could result in many Oregon patients not being able to get needed medications. Or patients instead having to pay out-of-pocket for many necessary medications.

I commend you for trying to address high prescription costs patients pay at the pharmacy counter, it is a problem that must be addressed, but I would much prefer to see us prioritize medical innovation that can lower the costs instead of appointing board members to arbitrarily set prices.

Critical medical decisions should be always be made in the best interest of patients.

I ask you all to vote against SB 844. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,
Dr. David Coutin