

Submitter: Marcus Winston  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB1529  
To: House Committee on Health Care  
Subject: SB1529

SB1529 was initially proposed as authorization for pharmacy technicians to swipe an identification card for the purchase of Sudafed.

Now, that language is gone and includes the bait-and-switch dash-two “-2” last minute amendment, creating an entirely new and highly concerning “health care emergency” bill. The dash-two language change would grant Oregon Health Authority (OHA) even more power, as an unelected body of government officials, with access to more than a \$29 billion budget for a two-year period.

The dash-two “-2” amendment would create an indirect workaround option to grant additional authority to the director of the Oregon Health Authority. The constitution supports no such authority, and, as such, demands this bill be stopped in its tracks.

This “health care emergency” dash-two language is disturbing because, as written, would allow an unelected “public health official” (who is not accountable to the people) to make the determination and announcement about an emergency. This can be done for any reason, as the language in the bill is purposely weak and vague. The public health director could, in essence, determine “that there exists a disease outbreak, epidemic or other condition of public health importance statewide or in a specified geographic area of this state.”

If adopted, what might this bill look like? It could mean that every winter – indefinitely – the Director, at their sole discretion, could declare, “Flu emergency: everyone must mask up, or close your business, or shut down in-person learning, or get vaccinated.” This is far too much authority for someone holding an unelected position. It is clear the lockdowns, masking, and coerced vaccinations were bad for our state. This path must end. Now.

This amendment does not answer any of the following questions:

- The ambiguous word “determination” is included in the dash-two amendment. This word is not defined anywhere and opens the door to abuses of power.
- Where is the accountability for the OHA Director, who—again—is an unelected bureaucrat? Nowhere.
- What problem is this amendment solving? None.
- How is a “specified geographic area of this state” even determined—could this mean

your apartment or neighborhood is targeted?

Absolute power corrupts absolutely, as history continues to show us. This direct effort to sneak in this amendment is an underhanded “gut and stuff” tactic that needs opposition. Please vote NO on SB1529-2 and withdraw any support.

The people of Oregon deserve greater transparency, accountability and discretion from our elected officials and those who hold unelected positions in our state agencies.

Sincerely,

Marcus Winston  
Washington County, OR  
Member of House District 28 (Campos)