

Submitter: Thomas Busse

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2833

As an activist involved in Libertarian politics out of concern with the failed war on drugs, intensive research has caused me to become a skeptic of naloxone as a community health tool. Unfortunately, I feel that Oregon Health Authority is not the appropriate agency to collect and study this data because of its blind obedience to guidelines bodies and its susceptibility to regulatory capture.

Naloxone is a generic drug first FDA approved in the 1970's. It started to be used for "overdose reversal" in the 1990's, but it really did not take off in the medical space until 2018 when the patent rights for the nasal spray were acquired by the biopharmaceutical company Emergent Biosolutions. At the time, Emergent's marketing director, Daniel J. Abdun-Nabi referred to schools, public libraries, community centers, police departments, and universities as "untapped markets." Emergent aggressively sued to keep generic competitors out of the market, and jacked up the price of their product to \$150/dose. Emergent also "seeded" the adoption of narcan bulk purchases by public bodies by donating its products to public libraries and YMCA's, thus normalizing the availability of Narcan. In Oregon, Emergent indirectly funds fake patient advocacy groups (aka "astro-turf") such as Need4Narcan and also subsidizes media outlets to report on the product and to fuel public perceptions of an overdose crisis.

I note in tandem with this activity, the Oregon Health Authority released a report on overdoses in Oregon that claimed a 300% increase. The current increase in abuse can be directly attributed to the OHA's own Covid lockdown policies. In other words, The OHA CREATED THE PROBLEM. Emergent has used its influence at HHS and the DEA to push "fake news" about a fentanyl crisis including the rainbow fentanyl halloween candy hoax, which was debunked by Reason magazine. Moreover, the OHA deceptively lied to the legislature by failing to disclose that it had switched from passive surveillance to active surveillance. This bill does the same - and the result is it will falsely validate narcan's effectiveness. Moreover, the OHA subsidizes Emergent Biosolutions via bulk Narcan purchases without a discount via the CCO HealthShare Oregon. Last year, HealthShare spent \$3 Million of OHA funds on a bulk purchase donated to Multnomah County - bypassing the county commissioners who never voted on a grant agreement. This is a drug that costs \$5 to make, is sold OTC at my local Walgreens for \$40, but the OHA paid \$150 per dose. The OHA is a bloated corrupt institution in need of reform. Giving it more duties at this time is bad government.

There is substantial concern that Narcan actually enables addiction. But the OHA

won't tell you that:

<https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/08/14/narcan-it-saves-lives-does-it-enable-addicts>

<https://www.mintpressnews.com/how-emergent-solutions-plans-corner-covid-19-cure-market/266615/>