



February 2nd, 2023

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on HB 2486, which would allow pharmacy technicians to administer vaccines. United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555 is the largest private sector labor union in Oregon. Our members come from a number of industries, including grocery, retail, food processing, manufacturing, and healthcare, including pharmacy technicians in retail and hospital settings.

Pharmacy technicians are the backbone of Oregon's pharmacy system, and a well trained technician makes a significant impact on the efficiency and efficacy of the pharmacy. Extending their responsibilities to include administration of vaccines had a significant positive impact on the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccines and boosters.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) allowed pharmacy technicians who fulfilled certain training requirements to administer vaccines under the supervision of a pharmacist. HB 2486 seeks to make this temporary expansion of scope of practice permanent under Oregon law. While the underlying concept is meritorious, we want to ensure that the language provides pharmacy technicians adequate protections under the law.

Part of the PREP Act protects vaccine administrators from personal liability in certain cases. We want to ensure that appropriate protections are enshrined in Oregon statute in order to protect pharmacy technicians from unwarranted personal liability on the job. As written, HB 2486 leaves this question open, and we are currently exploring to what degree explicit liability protections would be needed.

We know that with proper training, certified technicians are more than capable of administering vaccines safely. But we must ensure that we are protecting our workers so they can confidently do their jobs. We have no objection to moving this measure forward at this time, with the understanding that we are continuing to explore additional liability protections.

Thank you for your consideration.

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