

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, and members of the Oregon House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care:
Support SB607

My name is Timothy Whitcomb, I am the uncle of a victim of the raging Fentanyl crisis and I have never taken opioids in my life. I am also in love with an intractable pain patient who is dependent on opioids for quality of life. This small but important population of people endure conditions more painful than cancer, yet are denied access to medication because they simply aren't dying fast enough. The Oregon pain commission's original mission was for being an oasis and safe place for pain patients to voice their concerns. This experience makes me uniquely qualified to offer an opinion of why I enthusiastically support SB607.

I have personally witnessed the Oregon pain management commission (in most recent years) dismiss and ignore people who live with severe chronic and intractable pain conditions. Even those who attend commission meetings for help and support, are dismissed listened to only as formality, but they are not heard. How can a commission that's original mission was to protect pain patients take such a callous approach to people suffering from conditions? Because it has become regulatory captured. I commend the OPMC for very recently adding two pain specialists, but there are more improvements needed, given how far the commission has gone in the wrong direction.

The membership has become so anti medication it appears to be intentionally omitting a whole patient population with serious life impacting pain. We saw what happened to prohibition style approaches to alcohol in the 1930's. Moreover, the 2022 American Medical Association report does not support Oregon's radical anti-opioid agenda. This approach has not helped reduce the fentanyl poisoning crisis and data suggests, has worsened the crisis while chronic pain patients suffer. Now people with pain conditions are being stigmatized and shunned by even primary care doctors, no one wants these patients.

Oregon has become a hostile place to live for people with chronic and intractable pain conditions, and it is imperative the state's pain management commission membership is evaluated for bias and balance, that it represents all types of people living with pain conditions.

Moving SB607 forward would be a positive step forward for the people of Oregon,
Thank you for your consideration,
Timothy Whitcomb