



Caring Ambassadors Program  
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**Written Testimony  
House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care  
February 4, 2025**

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice Chair Javadi, Vice Chair Nelson, and committee members,

My name is Lorren Sandt, Executive Director of the Caring Ambassadors Program. The Caring Ambassadors Program is a national nonprofit advocacy organization based in Oregon City, Oregon. Caring Ambassadors has empowered patients to be advocates for their health since 1997. We provide education, support, and advocacy for people living with chronic diseases, focusing on lung cancer and hepatitis C. I sincerely appreciate your commitment to improving access to affordable healthcare for all Oregonians. We support much of HB 3212 but cannot support the bill as written without additional consumer protection language to protect patients from the dispensing fees at the point of sale.

In the PDAB meeting on December 18th, DCBS confirmed the state dispensing fee structure effective December 1st is tiered based on volume, \$9.89 up to \$16.87 and 20.86 for (340B). If these costs were to be passed on to the consumer at the point of sale, it would not only significantly increase the financial burden on patients but also disrupt the current healthcare system, derailing all of the work everyone has been doing to make drugs affordable for Oregonians.

Imagine going into the local pharmacy for your prescription. You have an anticipated cost of \$10 for your co-pay, and then the pharmacists ask for 26.87. Now imagine you have a chronic disease, and you take 4-5 medications a month (this is the average). Your monthly out-of-pocket costs just rose \$50-100. All to keep your pharmacist in business. If this bill is not amended to include protective language, this scenario could become a harsh reality for many Oregonians, forcing them to choose between their health and financial stability.

If the dispensing fee is necessary to sustain pharmacies, it should be factored into administrative fees and premiums. While this may lead to a slight increase in premiums, it's important to note that our insurance commissioner rigorously regulates these costs. Furthermore, spreading the costs across all plans ensures that the burden is not disproportionately placed on those living with chronic diseases, making the system more equitable.

Suggested consumer protection language on page 2, line 43

**o) May not pass on the cost of the professional dispensing fee paid under paragraph (n) of this subsection to a patient at the point of sale.**

I urge you to stand against PBM abuse and to pass this bill with strong consumer protection language. Your decision to do so will make health care more affordable and fairer for all Oregonians.

Once again, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your time and consideration of this important matter. Your dedication to improving healthcare for all Oregonians is truly commendable.

Sincerely,

Lorren Sandt