

Submitter: Sarah Kester
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2741

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2741.

This bill represents a critical investment in Oregon's public health infrastructure by requiring the Oregon Health Authority to maintain a state public health laboratory capable of analyzing biological and environmental samples, including performing newborn bloodspot screenings. These screenings are a proven, life-saving public health tool that allow for early detection of serious, often rare conditions—providing families and providers the ability to intervene early and prevent long-term harm.

What makes HB 2741 especially thoughtful is that it not only ensures universal access to these essential screenings, but it also affirms the importance of individual rights. The inclusion of a provision allowing parents or guardians to opt out for religious or philosophical reasons respects the autonomy of Oregon families while still promoting broad public health benefits.

This is smart, balanced policy. It strengthens our capacity to respond to both everyday and emergency health needs, promotes equity by standardizing care across the state, and upholds parental choice.

I urge your support of HB 2741 and thank you for your leadership in advancing the health and wellbeing of all Oregonians—especially our youngest residents.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kester
Keizer, Oregon