



Written Testimony in Support of HB 4131

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Date: February 2, 2026

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Diehl and Nelson, and members of the House Health Care committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written testimony **in support of HB 4131** to direct the State Board of Pharmacy to issue a license to operate a mobile pharmacy.

My name is Diana Nguyen, and I am a public health master's student from Beaverton, Oregon. I am also a Mental Health Coordinator for the Oregon Heals Coalition, an alliance of non-profit and advocacy organizations working together to achieve a mental health system in Oregon that is safe, equitable, affordable, culturally responsive, community-centered, and adequately serves those who have historically experienced the least access. This year, the Oregon Heals Coalition built our 2026 Legislative Agenda in partnership with the community and determined HB 4131 would gain our support as one of our priorities.

Access to pharmacy services, and thus medications, is an essential right of every human, regardless of where they live. Since 2008, more than 200 pharmacies have closed across Oregon with 30% of closures between 2013-2023 being in rural Oregon.¹ These numbers are likely to increase in the future and disproportionately affect rural, low-income, and minority communities. With an area of 98,381 square miles, about 86% of Oregon is classified as rural geography and over one-third of the population lives in rural or frontier areas.² A pharmacy closure in rural Oregon means no immediate access to life-saving drugs and simple refills become a major challenge. People are left with tough choices: skip their medication, drive hours to the nearest pharmacy (if they have access to a car), take time off work, or rely on others. Medication adherence is a major concern and missed doses can lead to being sick for longer and deteriorating health outcomes.

On top of difficulties accessing essential health care services, medications can be hard to manage. Individuals with mental health conditions often require multiple medications, each with complex dosing schedules and monitoring. Having access to a pharmacy enables individuals to receive guidance on safe use of drugs, monitoring for drug interactions, counseling for potential side effects, and thereby plays a critical role in the treatment and management of mental health conditions.

¹ https://www.orpdl.org/durm/newsletter/osdr_articles/volume14/osdr_v14_i6.pdf

² https://roundhousefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/RHF_Rural-Health_FINAL5-1.pdf



Mobile vehicle pharmacies, as proposed in HB 4131, can serve as a tool to reach rural areas in Oregon where pharmacy closures leave entire communities without reliable access to medications. Preliminary research has shown that mobile health clinics are effective in increasing access to care for underserved populations³ and partnerships with pharmacists has the potential to reduce health systems costs from preventable emergency care from missed prescriptions or delays in starting treatment.⁴ The value of mobile pharmacies lie in their ability to drive and park in locations that are easily accessible for the patients and flexibility in their routes to adapt to areas with higher demand and needs.

I urge you to **vote “YES” on HB 4131** to allow mobile pharmacies to provide immediate and improved access to life-saving medications that are vital to the health of Oregon communities.

Thank you for considering my testimony,
Diana Nguyen
The Oregon Heals Coalition



³ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29516055/>

⁴ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12226912/#CR33>