



WASHINGTON COUNTY

OREGON

Thursday, February 5th, 2026

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members Committee:

On behalf of Washington County Health and Human Services, I would like to raise concerns about the impact of SB 1573, which would restrict mobile syringe services programs (SSPs) from operating within 2000 feet of a school or daycare and would fine organizations if a syringe is discarded within that zone. This bill as currently written would severely reduce services, lead to worse health outcomes for an already vulnerable population, and would have the opposite effect intended on litter and waste as SSPs act as a collection site for syringes and other supplies.

With over 100 schools and nearly 600 daycare centers and homes in Washington County, SB 1573 as currently written would make finding a location for a mobile site nearly impossible. The bill also imposes a steep financial penalty for organizations that operate SSPs by making them liable for any syringe found within 2000 feet of their site. Combined, these provisions would make running an SSP logically unworkable and an immense financial risk, causing many organizations to reduce or eliminate their services.

Mobile SSPs meet people where they are and provide needed [services](#) free of barriers and stigma to people who can't get to a fixed site. Many SSPs provide an array of harm reduction services, such as testing, treatment, and vaccinations for various infectious diseases; providing people with overdose reversal medication; and connecting people with services for substance use treatment and other social services. Limiting where SSPs operate would reduce access to these services, as well, and would lead to worse health outcomes for vulnerable populations (e.g., transmission of HIV/hepatitis C, [increased](#) overdose deaths).

Mobile SSPs also [reduce](#) the number of improperly discarded syringes, which keeps people from coming across needles and other litter that can expose them to infectious diseases in parks and on the sidewalks. Restricting SSPs would likely result in *increased waste* – the opposite of what this bill is trying to achieve.

While I understand the intent to protect children, I would urge an approach that does not result in these unintended consequences. Here are some initial suggestions:

- Exempt SSP programs operated by state/county governments and organizations contracted by state/county governments to provide these services from the provisions in SB 1573
- Reduce the size of the buffer zone to ensure mobile SSPs can find locations to operate
- Remove home-based daycare from the list of facilities in Section 1
- Require programs that distribute syringes also collect syringes to reduce waste
- Exempt programs that collect syringes but do not distribute them

- Clarify the definition of syringe service program to exempt programs that exchange or distribute syringes for other medical purposes (e.g. insulin for diabetes management)

We look forward to working with Sen. Drazan and the committee to ensure HB 1573 can protect children and ensure vulnerable populations can access services. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important topic, and please reach out to me if you have any questions.

Warmly,

Zakir Khan
Government Relations Manager
Zakir_Khan@washingtoncountyor.gov
503-840-0635