

Submitter:

Jessica Leishman

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1598

Dear Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jessica Leishman, and I am writing today in support of Senate Bill 1598 and evidence-based practices in our state. I am a Clinical Care Program Coordinator with a graduate degree from Dartmouth in Public Health, and ensuring access to immunizations is important to me because public health depends on our shared responsibility to protect one another. We are interdependent—our individual health decisions affect our families, our neighbors, and the most medically vulnerable members of our communities. Vaccines are not only a personal health tool; they are a collective safeguard against preventable disease, and should be valued as such by ensuring seamless access to them.

In the fall, I encountered barriers to accessing immunizations that made clear how fragile this access already is. Insurance changes, pharmacy limitations, and appointment delays created real obstacles to getting vaccinated. Even short delays or uncertainty in coverage create real risk, particularly for people without flexible work schedules, reliable transportation, or disposable income, creating stark inequities for those who wish to vaccinate. If insurance coverage for immunizations is reduced or eliminated, the harm will fall hardest on those who already face structural barriers to care. This will inevitably result in delayed vaccinations, increased disease spread, and avoidable illness and death—outcomes that are entirely preventable with timely access to care.

SB 1598 is an important step to ensure Oregonians retain the choice and ability to access vaccines without unnecessary barriers. Protecting access to immunizations protects not only individuals, but our health care system, our schools, and our broader community. I urge your support of Senate Bill 1598 in the interest of public health, equity, and our shared obligation to do the right thing for one another.

Sincerely,

Jessica Leishman

Born, raised, and living in Oregon City