

Submitter: Mariana Ignacio

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1598

I'm writing in support of Oregon Senate Bill 1598 because I believe there has been a lot of confusion about what this bill actually does.

In simple terms, this bill helps ensure that preventive health services (including vaccines) are covered and easier to access for people who want them. It gives public health officials the ability to respond to public health needs by improving access and removing barriers. This bill is not about forcing vaccines on anyone. It is about access, not mandates.

I work in the public sector, and I've seen firsthand how difficult it can be for people to get basic medical care. Cost, lack of insurance, transportation, language barriers, and clinic availability are very real obstacles. There is a lot of privilege in having easy access to healthcare, and not everyone has that privilege. This bill helps bridge that gap for people who want preventive care but are currently unable to get it.

I respect personal choice and bodily autonomy, and I also stand firmly by science. Vaccines are safe, effective, and one of the most important tools we have to protect public health. We are already seeing the consequences of decreased vaccination rates, with diseases like measles increasing again across the country. Measles is highly contagious and can cause serious complications, especially for young children and those with weakened immune systems. Improving access to vaccines helps protect not only individuals, but entire communities.

Senate Bill 1598 is about public health, equity, and access. For those reasons, I strongly support this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.