

Submitter: Nichol Spatz
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1598

Opposition Testimony to SB 1598
Senate Committee on Health Care
State of Oregon

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to SB 1598 due to concerns regarding medical freedom, informed consent, and patient autonomy.

Access to preventive health care is important. However, SB 1598 grants sweeping authority to public health officials to require insurance coverage for immunizations and authorize standing prescription orders for public health concerns. This level of authority risks shifting deeply personal medical decisions away from patients and their trusted health care providers.

Medical care is not one-size-fits-all. Individuals have unique medical histories, risk factors, beliefs, and family considerations that deserve to be respected. Policies that broadly mandate or strongly incentivize specific medical interventions through insurance structures can create indirect pressure on patients, potentially limiting their ability to make fully voluntary health care choices.

Informed consent is a foundational principle of ethical medicine. Patients must have the right to evaluate benefits, risks, and alternatives in collaboration with their health care providers. When statewide standing orders or insurance mandates are expanded without clear safeguards for patient choice, there is concern that individualized care may be replaced by generalized public health directives.

Additionally, SB 1598 allows future immunization recommendations by public health officials to automatically influence insurance coverage requirements. This could allow significant medical policy changes to occur without direct legislative approval or meaningful public input. Decisions that affect bodily autonomy and medical decision-making deserve transparent oversight and open public dialogue.

I believe Oregon can support preventive health care while still protecting medical freedom. Any legislation addressing public health interventions should include explicit protections for informed consent, individualized medical decision-making, and the preservation of the patient-provider relationship.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to oppose SB 1598, to ensure strong protections for medical freedom and patient autonomy.

Thank you for your time and service to the people of Oregon.

Respectfully submitted,
Nichol Spatz