

Submitter: Barbara Canavan  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1598  
Testimony in Support of SB1598: Safeguarding Oregon Families from Infectious Diseases

I strongly support the passage of SB1598, which is essential for protecting Oregon families from preventable infectious diseases. Recent increases in vaccine-preventable illnesses underscore the urgency of this legislation.

As a historian of medicine and public health professional, I have seen the serious consequences of infectious disease outbreaks. For example, the 1989–1991 measles outbreaks resulted in 55,000 cases and 123 deaths, mostly among unvaccinated children. These events led to improved immunization rates by 2000. However, recent declining vaccination coverage has allowed measles and other diseases to re-emerge in over 40 states.

SB1598 enables healthcare providers to administer vaccines more efficiently through standing orders, ensuring timely protection for all Oregonians. While vaccine safety concerns exist, extensive scientific evidence confirms vaccines are both effective and safe. The bill balances parental rights with the need to protect public health.

I urge lawmakers to support SB1598 to ensure a safer and healthier Oregon.