

Submitter: Minden Tooze
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1598

I have serious concerns about this bill in regards to transparency, accountability, and constitutional safeguards in Oregon.

While states should control their own public health decisions, SB1598 goes too far by automatically tying insurance mandates to recommendations from the state health department, even when those recommendations are developed in consultation with organizations that receive funding from vaccine manufacturers. Delegating influence to financially interested third parties creates structural conflicts of interest and opens the door to regulatory capture.

The bill also concentrates extraordinary authority on one unelected official by allowing departmental recommendations to trigger mandatory statewide insurance coverage. That effectively creates a public health “power broker” without direct legislative approval.

Oregon can lead in decentralized, accountable public health, but not by outsourcing influence to conflicted advisory bodies or weakening statutory safeguards.