

Submitter: Jeanne Tung  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1598

My name is Dr. Jeanne Tung and I am a physician who is worried about vaccine affordability and access in Oregon.

Specifically I am practicing pediatric gastroenterologist of ~20 years who has specialized in treating children with Inflammatory Bowel Disease and other chronic GI diseases. A number of these children need medications that suppress their immune system to control their diseases. This leaves them vulnerable to infectious illnesses that can be devastating. We routinely recommend our patients get annual flu and COVID vaccines. Unfortunately if they never had the measles and varicella (chickenpox) vaccines, or lost protection they can NOT get these vaccines while on immunosuppressant medications. They rely then on other family, friends, schools, churches, etc to get vaccinated to provide 'herd immunity'. My colleagues and I also care for other children who have been previously healthy and yet had serious complications from vaccine preventable illnesses -- as 'basic' as the flu and COVID. Children do not get to make decisions on their own and rely on their caregivers, physicians, medical community, insurance companies, and you as legislators to protect their health.

I support SB1598 to ensure that Oregon families do not have additional cost or logistical barriers to obtaining preventative vaccines. This bill champions patient choice, by ensuring those who want immunizations are able to do so without having to worry about payment or making a hard to come by appointment with their primary care physician or pediatrician to undergo mandatory shared decision making.

SB1598:

Protects access to preventive care. SB 1598 helps ensure Oregonians can continue to access evidence-based preventive services without new barriers or delays.

Responds to recent federal changes. Shifting federal guidance in 2025 limited access to certain immunizations, creating confusion for patients and providers without being based on new safety or efficacy data.

Ensures continuity of coverage. Updating Oregon's insurance code to June 30, 2025 preserves coverage for widely supported, evidence-based preventive services.

Supports patient choice. SB 1598 does not mandate immunizations or require anyone to receive care.

Allows Oregon to act nimbly. Standing order authority gives the state tools to respond quickly when federal guidance changes and access is at risk.

Respects medical judgment. Providers may continue to practice according to evidence-based recommendations and their clinical expertise.

Keeps decisions between patients and providers. SB 1598 reinforces science-based care while maintaining flexibility and trust in the clinician-patient relationship.

Thank you,  
Jeanne Tung, MD