

Submitter: Brian Whitacre  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1598

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Diehl and Nelson, and Members of the Committee:

I am a Gresham resident and concerned Oregonian writing to urge you to reject Senate Bill 1598.

This bill gives one politically appointed state official — the Public Health Officer — dangerous new power to issue “standing orders” for any vaccine, drug, or medical device related to public health. Those orders would automatically force newer health insurance plans to cover them with zero cost-sharing for patients. That means the rest of us pay higher premiums to cover whatever this unelected official decides.

I am especially troubled by the clear risk of backdoor deals. A single appointed doctor could recommend a product from a pharmaceutical company, and suddenly every insurance company in Oregon would be required by law to pay for it in full. There are no strong safeguards against industry influence or conflicts of interest. This is not public health — it is a blank check for special interests.

Additional serious problems with SB 1598:

- It bypasses elected lawmakers and hands ongoing decision-making to one person.
- It uses an “emergency” clause to rush the bill into immediate effect, skipping the normal 91-day waiting period.
- It undermines informed consent and the doctor-patient relationship by creating a one-size-fits-all statewide approach.
- It will likely raise health insurance costs for working families across Oregon.

Oregonians deserve real oversight, not more government overreach. Please stand up for personal medical freedom and fiscal responsibility by voting NO on SB 1598.

Thank you for your service and for considering my strong opposition.

Sincerely,  
Brian Whitacre