Alliance of Specialty Medicine

Sound Policy. Quality Care.

February 26, 2015

Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson
Chair,
Senate Health and Welfare Committee
900 Court St NE, S-413
Salem, OR 97301
Sen.LaurieMonnesAnderson@state.or.us

Rep. Mitch Greenlick
Chair,
House Health and Welfare Committee
900 Court St NE, H-493
Salem, OR 97301
Rep.MitchGreenlick@state.or.us

RE: Senate Bill 147 and House Bill 2026 – dispensing of interchangeable biosimilars

Dear Senator Monnes Anderson and Representative Greenlick:

The Alliance of Specialty Medicine (Alliance) is a coalition of national medical specialty societies representing more than 100,000 physicians and surgeons. We are dedicated to the development of sound health care policy that fosters patient access to the highest quality specialty care. The undersigned member organizations of the Alliance of Specialty Medicine write regarding Senate Bill 147 and House Bill 2026 related to the dispensing of interchangeable biosimilars.

The Alliance has closely followed the development of federal policy related to biosimilars and the safety considerations that should be taken into account as biosimilar versions of existing biologic medicines become a new treatment option for our patients. **Importantly, SB 147 addresses key policy issues to ensure patient safety is preserved, including physician authority to prevent substitutions and ensuring that once biosimilars come to market the treating physician is notified if another version of the biologic medicine is substituted for the version prescribed by the doctor.** However, **we are concerned that the bill currently fails to define "reasonable time" regarding the timely notification of a substitution to the prescriber.** To ensure accurate patient medical records, whether or not they are electronic, and allow the prescriber up to date information in the case of an adverse event, notification must be made in a timely manner. We urge you to further define "reasonable time" in SB 147.

House Bill 2026 fails to provide for notification to the prescriber of a substitution. For that reason, **we write in opposition of HB 2026** and urge the committee to provide for timely notification, preferably within 3 days, of the prescriber.

The practice of automatic substitution that is seen with generic drugs is not entirely appropriate for biosimilar products given that they are not simply "generic" versions of biologics. Physicians need to know what medicine their patient receives and therefore, the prescribing physician should be notified as soon as possible whenever a patient's biologic medicine is substituted.

Advances in medical treatment have transformed the way we fight certain diseases. Biologics, and soon biosimilars, will continue to be an important treatment option for patients. The Alliance of Specialty Medicine urges you to ensure appropriate safeguards to allow for the safe introduction of biosimilars into the practice of medicine.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American College of Mohs Surgery
American Gastroenterological Association
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery
American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of Plastic Surgeons
American Urological Association
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
North American Spine Society
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions
Society for Excellence in Eyecare