



April 2, 2019

State Rep. Andrea Salinas, Chair  
State Rep. Cedric Hayden, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Health Care  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Salinas and Vice-Chair Hayden:

We are writing in regard to HB 2678, a bill giving the Oregon Health Authority the ability to require prior authorization when a physician recommends prescription drugs that are not listed on the state drug plan and are reimbursed in Medicaid on a fee-for-service basis. In particular, we urge the committee to include additional language in this bill that protects a physician's ability to recommend a specific treatment based on the individual needs of a patient.

There is nobody more informed and qualified to make professional judgments about the treatment of a patient than his or her doctor. That's why safeguarding the unique nature of the doctor-patient relationship is so enconced in our healthcare system. While approved drug lists and formularies are established strategies in cost containment, existing agreements do not place limits on a physician's ability to prescribe a treatment. Without language making it clear HB 2678 won't place further restrictions on treatments, the bill will introduce new limits on patient access to medication a physician would like to prescribe.

Patients often react differently to different medication, which is why physicians need access to a wide range of treatment options. As we stated, physicians are the most informed caregiver when it comes to understanding the breadth of a patient's medical conditions. Often, there are a number of conditions being treated and understanding how different medications interact with each other is critical. Removing prescription drug options may lead to less-effective treatments and greater, not less, healthcare utilization. This serves neither the patient nor the goal of cost-containment.

Inserting language to protect a physician's ability to prescribe the best treatment simply upholds current law and practice. We urge the inclusion of an amendment to protect the doctor-patient relationship.

Sincerely,

American Diabetes Association  
Caring Ambassadors  
Epilepsy Foundation Oregon  
Kaleidoscope Fighting Lupus  
Lupus Foundation of America  
Sisters Against Lupus