

## SB 698 Testimony

Chair Salinas, Vice-Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair Hayden, and members of the committee.

For the record, my name is Teresa Alonso Leon, and I am the Representative for House District 22, which incorporates Woodburn, through the North part of Salem. As someone who cares deeply about ensuring everyone has access to affordable healthcare, I'm here to ask you to support SB 698.

I have prepared a document for you all; in this document, you have instructions on how to administer your prescription in one of the top five Limited Proficiency Languages, which are Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Mandarin and Korean. I would like for you to take a moment to read these instructions. I imagine it was difficult for you to decipher what was on your prescription label. This is the experience for many Oregonians today.

Currently, it is estimated that over two hundred thousand (200,000) Oregonians cannot accurately read the instructions or information on their prescriptions because of Limited English Proficiency. A study from 2005 that was cited in a 2016 article found that people with Limited English proficiency are more than two times as likely to make a medical error related to taking their medications. This can result in emergency room visits, and hospital stays due to entirely avoidable circumstances. This results in an increased strain on an already overburdened, and under-funded, healthcare system here in Oregon. One Harvard

study found that preventable emergencies like this can cost up to \$1.2 Million a year per hospital. SB 698 proposes a simple solution for a silent and costly problem.

Lastly, we have worked hard to ensure the implementation of this bill is successful. We have brought in the perspective of the Board of Pharmacy in our conversations as well as tried to take input from folks who were concerned with the implementation of this bill into account, every step of the way. The -3 amendment was a result of this collaboration. In front of you is a visual that breaks down this work.

<b>Original Intention of Bill</b>	<b>Pharma</b>	<b>Compromise</b>
Dual language labels on the bottles	Translated Handouts	The Board of Pharmacy will be deciding what prescription directions make sense to be translated in an insert.
All Pharmacies	Start with	Retail drug outlets and other drug outlets that dispense medication, this excludes correctional, and any other inpatient pharmacies
Translate label for anyone who is of Limited English Proficiency	State Board Pharmacy outline requirements In Rules	Start with top 14 LEPs, and allow board of pharmacy to add more languages in the future/ as well as update the top 14 languages
Pharmacist required to notify patient of accommodations	They want doctors and patient to request the translations	Visible sign that states translations services are available, as well as the patient, the doctor, or a patient representative may request translated labels
Operative date 2020	Not enough time to implement this	Operative date 2021

-1 Amendment 14 specific languages

Technology does not support some of those languages, use 0.02% of languages in the census.

14 languages determined by the Board of Pharmacy

The intention of the -3 amendment is to clarify that translated information should always be included on the label unless the information in English is provided via supplemental materials. We know that some medications directions are lengthy, and the instructions are currently provided separately, in those cases the translation can also be in supplemental materials as determined by the Board of Pharmacy.

I trust the Board of Pharmacy to create rules to aide outpatient pharmacies in the implementation of this proposed legislation. We do not expect compliance from inpatient pharmacies such as correctional institutions, and other long-term care pharmacies. The board will further identify any pharmacies that must comply, via rules.

As we work to promote diversity and racial justice throughout Oregon, it is essential for us to remember that justice can look in many ways. It is not enough to create policy or establish best practices that make our state more inviting to a diverse population if we do not actively work to make it accessible for the people we are trying to attract. It is our duty as elected officials to advocate for systems that protect our constituents but supports them as well. That is justice.

Thank you.

