



February 10, 2020

Dear Chair Salinas and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Basic Rights Oregon, I'm writing to respectfully request your support for HB 4116, which will provide greater access to HIV preventative medications including PrEP and PEP.

Currently, the Public Health & Formulary Advisory Committee (PHFAC) has begun the process of adopting policy recommendations that will allow pharmacists in Oregon to prescribe PrEP and PEP. HB 4116 is a necessary step because it ensures a framework exists so that these policies are as effective as possible and increase access to these critical medications.

The need is apparent in our communities. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 1.1 million persons in the United States are currently living with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), with 707,100 gay and bisexual men living with HIV¹. In Oregon, according to the Oregon Health Authority, there are 210 to 230 new HIV infections every year, and gay and bisexual men comprise the largest proportion of HIV cases.² In the face of these growing numbers, there are life-saving antiretroviral drugs to treat individuals living with HIV, in addition to drugs that can prevent HIV infection altogether.

Yet there is still a major barrier to access due to expense and accessibility of these drugs, and the people who need these life-saving medications cannot wait any longer.

HB 4116 takes a major step towards addressing these concerns by aligning Oregon with national standards of care which means insurance companies cannot require patients to obtain prior authorization before using their insurance benefits to obtain PrEP or PEP.

It also will ensure that PrEP and PEP are covered even at an out-of-network pharmacy, and that insurance providers reimburse pharmacists for fees associated with providing patient consultations for prescribing medications like PrEP and PEP.

By eliminating barriers to care, ending HIV in Oregon is possible. HB 4116 can help get us there, and I ask for your full support for this bill.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nancy Haque

Executive Director, Basic Rights Oregon

¹ CDC, [Estimated HIV incidence and prevalence in the United States 2010–2016](#)

² Oregon Health Authority, [HIV Data and Analysis](#):

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DiseasesConditions/CommunicableDisease/DiseaseSurveillanceData/HIVData/Pages/index.aspx>