
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon

February 11, 2020

Chair Salinas, Vice-Chairs Nosse and Hayden, and Members of the House Committee on Health Care,

As the state's leading political voice for reproductive health care, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon urges strong support for HB 4116, which would expand access to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-prevention medication, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and emergency post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 1.1 million persons in the United States are currently living with HIV. In Oregon, there are 210 to 230 new HIV infections every year. Fortunately, there are options available to people to prevent HIV infection, PrEP, a single pill that can reduce the risk of contracting HIV by more than 95 percent when taken daily, and PEP, which can prevent HIV infection if treatment begins within 72 hours of exposure. Oregon Planned Parenthood health centers have prioritized providing PrEP and PEP to help patients reduce their risk of contracting HIV.

Currently, fewer than 10 percent of the estimated 1 million Americans at substantial risk for HIV and who could benefit from PrEP are using the medication. Like many things in health care, accessibility plays a large role in medication utilization. In Oregon, there are nearly twice as many PrEP providers in the Portland metro area than the rest of the state. The Public Health and Formulary Advisory Committee (PHFAC) has already begun the process of adopting policy recommendations that will allow pharmacists in Oregon to prescribe PrEP and PEP. HB 4116 is a necessary step to ensure that a framework exists for these new policies to be implemented successfully. The bill also takes a step towards addressing access issues by aligning Oregon with national standards of care, which prohibits insurance companies from requiring 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.

Eliminating barriers to care will make a huge impact in reducing rates of HIV infection in Oregon. Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon respectfully urges your support of HB 4116.

Sincerely,

Emily McLain
Executive Director
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon