

Senate Committee on Health Care
Re: Senate Bill 457

Chair Patterson, members of the Committee;

Cascade AIDS Project ("CAP") supports SB 457 and the effort to provide better transparency and access to Oregon's Medicaid coverage process. CAP is the oldest and largest community-based provider of HIV services, housing, education and advocacy in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Through Prism Health, we offer safe, affirming, and non-judgmental space where all members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community can obtain the compassionate and culturally effective health care they need and deserve. Whether as advocates or partnerships with clinical providers, CAP and Prism Health strive to ensure the best possible care to patients regardless of their ability to pay for health-care services.

The Oregon Health Plan is critical to many of the patients we serve. In recent years, as new treatments emerge for the people living with HIV, we have advocated to ensure access to the best, cutting-edge treatments. This includes closely monitoring the coverage determination process at the HERC and P&T. While we have been pleased with some coverage determinations, interfacing with the process can be difficult for patients and advocates alike. The right outcomes should not be a barrier to a better process. SB 457 will bring much needed transparency and fairness to the Medicaid coverage process in Oregon. This bill will not only expand time-frames for monitoring and responding to coverage recommendations, but ensure that the decisions consider the newest medical evidence and are made free from conflict or bias. Further, we support efforts to ensure that all providers, including CCO's align their process and evidentiary standards with the Oregon Health Authority.

We believe SB 457 is good governance, good for patients, and good for Oregon as a whole. Please support this common-sense, important legislation.

Sincerely,
Peter Parisot
Chief of Staff & Chief Legal Officer
Cascade AIDS Project & Prism Health