

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2376 to Protect Oregonians At-Risk of Opioid Overdose
House Committee on Health Care
March 25, 2021

Chair Prusak and members of the House Committee on Health Care, on behalf of the Oregon Consumer League, Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens, and United Seniors of Oregon, we come together today in full support of HB 2376, which would protect consumer and senior populations in Oregon at-risk of opioid-related overdose by allowing them greater access to potentially life-saving medicines like naloxone.

HB 2376 would require Oregon providers who prescribe opioids to simultaneously offer a prescription for naloxone and educate their patients about their risk of an overdose. Co-prescribing laws have proven to effectively increase access to potentially life-saving opioid overdose reversal medications for those at risk of an overdose. By passing this law, Oregon would join ten other states that have already enacted policies mandating co-prescribing or offering a prescription of naloxone for patients at-risk of opioid overdose – and these states have seen access to naloxone dramatically increase as more health care professionals prescribed naloxone to patients.

The Oregon Consumer League, Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens, and United Seniors of Oregon all see HB 2376 as a potentially life-saving measure for not only the many Oregon seniors who manage their pain with opioid medicines – but for consumers all around our great state.

From January to June 2020, more than 330 people died of a drug overdose in Oregon. With House Bill 2376, Oregon has the opportunity to protect more Oregonians from the fatal harms of opioid overdoses by equipping them with a potentially life-saving overdose reversal medication at the same time they obtain an opioid prescription.

We thank the chair and the committee for your leadership and support on this measure.

Steve Weiss, President, Oregon Consumer League and Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens
Jim McConnell, President, United Seniors of Oregon