



**Sharon Meieran**  
Multnomah County Commissioner, District 1

To: House Committee On Health Care  
From: Sharon Meieran, Multnomah County Commissioner  
Date: March 30, 2021  
Re: Support for House Bill 2958

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Chair Prusak, Vice Chairs Hayden and Salinas, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sharon Meieran, I'm a Multnomah County Commissioner and a practicing emergency physician, and I am very pleased to offer testimony in support of House Bill 2958.

This measure would improve access to HIV preventive medications including PrEP and PEP. I have personally experienced needing to be considered for receiving PEP and I know the sense of urgency, anxiety, and uncertainty that accompanies an exposure to HIV. I also see patients in the Emergency Department (ED) who have potentially been exposed to HIV, and come to the ED for PEP because it's one of the few places they can go. EDs will always be there for people in need, but they can be challenging to navigate - especially for non-emergent conditions. Waiting times in the ED can be long and, frankly, EDs can be traumatic places to seek and receive care.

As we fight to end the HIV epidemic, removing barriers to life saving medications is crucial. This is especially important for people who experience marginalization, discrimination, and other challenges to receiving basic healthcare. We need to ensure that medications like PrEP and PEP are truly accessible -- meaning available, affordable and convenient -- in as many places as possible, and without barriers for those who need them. Pharmacists are experts in medication prescribing and interpreting lab data, they are accessible, and they often have direct relationships with their clients. They are an ideal resource to leverage as we consider ways to make PEP and PrEP more accessible.

HB 2958 is an important, measured step in this direction. The bill simply clarifies that licensed pharmacists in Oregon have the legal authority to conduct an HIV test, order lab tests, and interpret lab-test results in order to safely prescribe PrEP. It also will ensure that PrEP and PEP are covered without prior authorization, at both in-network and out-of-network pharmacies, and require that insurance providers reimburse fees associated with prescribing PrEP and PEP.

I strongly urge you to pass House Bill 2958. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Meieran