

April 24, 2021

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
From: Health Care for All Oregon  
RE: SB 5555 in Support of Funding for SB 763 and SB 844

Co-Chair Johnson, Co-Chair Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair Rayfield, and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Health Care for All Oregon stands in solidarity with the people of Oregon who are extremely concerned about the egregious price increases by the pharmaceutical industry. As a state and a nation, we must take steps to make medication more affordable. Without making medications more affordable health care will never be affordable.

HCAO supports the funding for SB 763 which would take incremental but important steps towards regulating drug sales and prices. It is time to shed light on the secretive tactics of pharmaceutical sales reps. It is time to regulate the lobbying of health care providers by drug sales reps. by requiring registration of the individuals who market pharmaceutical products, their education on ethical standards, and disclosure of their interactions with providers. This only makes sense and it is about time.

HCAO supports the funding of SB 844 which would create a Prescription Drug Affordability Board. This represents an important step towards regulating the price of prescriptions.

From individuals, families and communities across the state we hear that prescription drugs have become prohibitively expensive. We often hear that it becomes an issue of affording medication or groceries or housing.

The board created under SB 844 would identify drugs which cause affordability challenges, create upper limits on prices on those drugs, and penalize price gouging during emergencies. The board would be managed by the Department of Consumer and Business Services.

HCAO respectfully requests the Joint Committee on Ways and Means support the full funding necessary for implementation of SB 763 and SB 844.

These bills are critical steps to the physical and economic health of all Oregonians who depend on prescription medication. Addressing the high cost of drugs is essential to get to affordable universal healthcare for all.

Thanks for your time and consideration in this matter.

Tom Sincic, MSN, Family Nurse Practitioner-Retired  
President, Health Care for All Oregon  
president@hcao.org