Tuesday, June 18th, 2021
Testimony of Joanna Olson
Oregon State House Health Care Committee Hearing on SB 764

Madame Chair, members of the committee, thank you for having me here today to share my story.

My name is Joanna Olson and I am from Beaverton, Oregon. As an 86-year-old, I am fortunate to have remarkably good health that allows me to do all the things I love like kayaking, gardening, dancing, and spending time with my grandchildren.

However, recently, I was diagnosed with a blood clot in my leg and was prescribed a medication called Eliquis. Thankfully, the blood clots didn't endanger my life—but I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the cost .

When I went to pick up my first 30-day supply of Eliquis, the pharmacist told me it would cost $430. Assuming there had been an error, I reminded her that I had insurance. She replied that the $430 cost was *after* insurance—and that the full price of the medicine was actually much higher.

I still require Eliquis and probably will for the rest of my life — but every time I pick up the prescription, I think about leaving without the drug.

Eliquis wasn't always this expensive. But the company that makes it has hiked the price every single year since 2013—nearly doubling the price during that time. Pharmaceutical companies set exorbitant prices while simultaneously [blocking](#) generic competition simply because they can. We have no way to push back.

Patients shouldn't have to worry about affording the drugs we need. A common medicine needed by millions like Eliquis shouldn't break the bank for seniors like me, who live on a fixed income.

It's wrong what the drug companies are allowed to get away with. I am asking our legislators to fight for patients like us. Thanks to SB 764, we do not have to accept this. This legislation would hold drug companies accountable for their abusive tactics and ban these greedy maneuvers that put profits over people.

I urge you to vote in support of Senate Bill 764 to bring much-needed relief to patients across our state.

Thank you for your time.