



*Improving Life Through
Empowerment*

February 18, 2021

House Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 2421

Dear Chairwoman Prusak and Committee Members:

Dialysis Patient Citizens (DPC) writes to offer its comments in support of HB 2421, sponsored by Rep. Moore-Green and Vice Chairwoman Salinas, to establish an Oregon Kidney Disease Prevention and Education Task Force.

Founded in 2004, DPC is a nationwide, non-profit, patient-led organization dedicated to improving the lives of End State Renal Disease (ESRD) patients by advocating for favorable public policy to support dialysis patient needs and improve patient outcomes. DPC has 28,000 patient members nationwide, 400 of whom reside in the state of Oregon. Our policies and mission are guided solely by our membership and our patient-led volunteer Board. DPC is committed to promoting access to high-quality dialysis care for individuals with ESRD; to the prevention of, delayed onset of, and safe transition to ESRD among individuals with chronic kidney disease (CKD); and access to kidney transplantation as well as to other alternatives to dialysis that may emerge.

If enacted, HB 2421 would establish a multi-year task force made up of a diverse set of stakeholders – including legislators, representatives of governmental agencies, providers, a kidney patient, advocacy organizations and community organizations representing health equity interests – appointed by Senate and House Leadership and by the Governor with the goal to develop a sustainable plan and raise awareness about early detection of kidney disease, promote greater health equity and reduce the burden of kidney disease statewide. The task force would also develop an ongoing public information campaign that includes a wide array of activities such as health education workshops and seminars, research, preventative screening and advertisements on various media outlets to reach a broad audience, targeting those who are most vulnerable to developing kidney disease. Finally, the task force shall produce annual reports regarding its work, including recommendations to the legislature for further action.

1001 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 1230 • Washington, D.C. 20036 • Toll Free Number
1.866.877.4242 • Fax 1.888.423.5002

www.dialysispatients.org • Email: dpc@dialysispatients.org

DPC is a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization governed by dialysis patients.

The creation of a task force is a welcome opportunity to improve patient outcomes, lower health care costs and reduce existing health disparities. This legislation would raise awareness among patient populations most at risk of developing kidney disease, such as those with diabetes and hypertension as well as racial and ethnic groups who have disproportionately higher rates of CKD, to educate them about the ramifications of developing CKD or ESRD and help them manage their treatment, be more prepared for dialysis and aware of their treatment options in the event they reach kidney failure and navigate transplant eligibility requirements. Currently, the annual cost to Medicare to treat pre-dialysis patients or transplant recipients is approximately \$25,000, whereas the annual cost to Medicare to treat dialysis patients is about \$90,000.¹ Further education and prevention efforts can help thwart unnecessary health care costs and improve patient outcomes, especially for those patient populations most at risk.

The establishment of an Oregon Kidney Disease Prevention and Education Task Force aligns directly within the scope of DPC's mission to expand education and prevention efforts for patients with kidney disease. In recognizing the need for more educational resources to help kidney disease patients, particularly in light of the fact that ninety percent of the estimated 37 million CKD patients are unaware they have kidney disease² and many of those who experience kidney failure "crash into" dialysis without any prior knowledge or understanding of their kidney disease, DPC's Board launched the DPC Education Center in 2012 to expand our education and awareness efforts beyond advocacy for dialysis patients.

Expanding education and prevention efforts could greatly help CKD patients recognize and manage their kidney disease more effectively and also help reduce or delay kidney failure which necessitates dialysis treatment or a transplant in order to survive. Even those CKD patients who progress to ESRD, or kidney failure, would benefit from earlier detection and more education because they will be more informed and better prepared to address their disease and treatment options, which then leads to better health outcomes. Therefore, DPC urges you to support passage of HB 2421.

DPC staff and I look forward to working with legislators on this and other important policy issues that support patients with kidney disease and create more equitable health outcomes. If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to contact Kelly Goss, Western Region Advocacy Director at Dialysis Patient Citizens, at 916.917.4519 or kgoss@dialysispatients.org.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

¹ Id. Organ Procurement and Transplant Network (2020)

² U.S. Renal Data System (2020)

Andrew
Conkling

Andrew Conkling
President, Board of Directors
Dialysis Patient Citizens

Cc: Vice Chair Cedric Hayden
Vice Chair Andrea Salinas
Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon
Rep. Winsvey Campos
Rep. Maxine Dexter
House Republican Leader Christine Drazan
Rep. Raquel Moore-Green
Rep. Ron Noble
Rep. Sheri Schouten

1001 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 1230 • Washington, D.C. 20036 • Toll Free Number
1.866.877.4242 • Fax 1.888.423.5002

www.dialysispatients.org • Email: dpc@dialysispatients.org

DPC is a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization governed by dialysis patients.