

Members of the Committee,

Since my 20s, I have been battling a chronic disease. Advancements in biopharmaceutical research thankfully took some of the more severe, surgical options off the table in lieu of medical treatments. Those treatments, however, are staggeringly expensive and there were times where meeting my insurance deductible or paying out of pocket put real strain on my finances. I know I am not alone and I firmly believe that medical treatment for chronic conditions should not come down to a choice between health and other life goals like homeownership, a degree or more. While cutting edge drugs hold significant promise for patients, that promise is diluted if the cost of those drugs constitutes a deterrent for patients or if the cost destroys personal finances.

This past year has been financially and emotionally challenging for many across Oregon. Coupled with a global pandemic, access to proper healthcare and adequate treatments are top priority for all.

SB 439 provides the opportunity for patients to continue to access the best available medications while lowering out-of-pocket costs. Knowing that often pharmaceutical companies issue rebates and discounts to insurance companies in order to reduce patient costs but that those rebates are not shared with patients is something I am very happy to see you address.

These discounts are supposed to benefit patients directly at the pharmacy by lowering costs like deductible charges or coinsurance. This proposed legislation requiring that insurance companies reduce cost sharing for prescriptions by 85% of the rebates received from the insurance company can have an immediate, positive impact on Oregon patients.

Simply put, SB 439 puts money back into the pockets of patients and can help those in vulnerable positions.

This is the right move in helping alleviate out of pocket prescription costs, I urge you to pass SB 439.