



## **STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF SB 410**

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 410, which would require the State Board of Pharmacy to issue a provisional license that can be renewed once.

UFCW Local 555 is the largest private sector labor union in Oregon. Our members come from a number of industries, including grocery, retail, food processing, manufacturing, and healthcare, including pharmacy technicians in retail and hospital settings. We are a diverse group of workers who take pride in acting as a strong collective voice for working people.

Pharmacy technicians in Oregon are trained to locate, dispense, pack and label prescribed medication for patients. Their work is vital to pharmacy operations and supports pharmacists and physicians in providing the highest quality of care for patients.

In order to become a certified pharmacy technician, a worker may apply for a provisional license with the Oregon Board of Pharmacy. This allows workers to train on the job while they pass their national certification exam. Once they've achieved national certification, they can apply for a Certified Oregon Pharmacy Technician License, which allows pharmacy technicians to pursue higher paying jobs, take on more responsibilities, and operate at the top of their scope of practice.

This provisional license model is a great way to get more employees into the workforce, but it is important that we are creating upward mobility for workers entering this sector by creating a pathway to national certification.

Earlier this year, to address staffing shortages, the Oregon Board of Pharmacy made a change to the licensure requirements to allow Pharmacy Technicians to renew their provisional license in perpetuity. The change disincentivizes workers and their employers from investing in training programs and pathways to certification, instead placing the burden on current employees to train and prepare the new workforce. The lack of training has also increased safety concerns and led to a lower standard of care for many patients.

Our solution is SB 410, which would direct the Oregon Board of Pharmacy to change the requirements to make the provisional license renewable once. This provides entry-level Pharmacy Technicians access to a good paying job and two full years to prepare and take their national

**UNITED FOOD & COMMERCIAL WORKERS LOCAL 555**

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certification exam. As the healthcare sector continues to grow, placing a limit on the provisional license will incentivize workers and their employers to pursue the nationally recognized certification requirements.

These requirements will ensure a workforce that has the medical and pharmaceutical knowledge and cultural competency training to provide excellent patient care. It is also the pathway to higher paying positions and more responsibilities and independence on the job. We at UFCW 555 are excited to encourage more workers to join the healthcare sector, particularly workers of color, low income workers, and younger workers looking for a stable, meaningful career. But we must ensure that they are set up for success, and have the knowledge, training, and support they need in order to provide quality care to patients.

Thank you for your time, and I urge your support for SB 410.

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Political Liaison,  
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