



February 14, 2023
HB 2574 - Support

Chair Nosse and members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care: I am Anthony Arton, Public Health Director for Coos County and the Co-Chair of the Legislative Committee for the Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials (CLHO). I write in support of HB 2574 – Rural Hospital Access to HIV PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis).

HB 2574 will support equitable access to prevention drugs for individuals who were recently exposed to HIV. I have heard of individuals in our rural communities, such as Coos County, spending hours and sometimes days calling or driving around the state seeking hospitals or facilities that carry this potentially life-saving/altering post-exposure prevention drug. This is far from ideal when on a short 72 hour clock to prevent infection from HIV exposure. In Oregon, due to its high cost and shelf-life, not all hospitals currently choose to carry PEP nor do they store enough supply for the full regimen of treatment.

This bill would buy the patient some time, as it requires hospitals to carry the first five regimen days' supply, paid for by the state via the Oregon Health Authority.

In addition, the bill requires hospitals to have policies and procedures in place so they know when and how to dispense the drugs. This could have potentially huge positive financial impacts for the patients as well as savings for Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurers. The less people are infected with HIV, the less risk of future exposure to other individuals, and the less burden on Oregon's healthcare system.

This is a simple and reasonable piece of legislation that can truly have a positive impact on the lives of Oregonians through increased access to preventative treatment. Please support HB 2574.

Sincerely,
Anthony Arton

