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Oregonians Strongly Support Legislative Policies to Require PBMs to Lower Drug Costs, Provide Value

New Poll Finds 87% of Respondents Support Regulating Pharmacy Benefit Managers

Salem, Ore. – With the Beaver State already facing negative impacts of harmful business practices by pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), a new poll among likely Oregon voters finds that an overwhelming majority support policy proposals to require these middlemen health insurance companies to lower drug costs and provide value to Oregonians.

The statewide poll found that **87% of likely Oregon voters across party lines support regulating PBMs**. More than **3 out of 4 likely Oregon voters say regulating these middlemen health insurance companies should be a high or top priority for Congress and the state legislature**, and **82% of respondents state they are more or much more likely to vote for a candidate who supports PBM regulations**.

The findings of the state poll mirror those of a similar national poll but with even higher levels of support among Oregonians for regulation and action; both polls were conducted by the bipartisan polling team of Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Research.

“It’s clear that Oregonians – like all Americans – are looking for actionable reforms to help make medicines more affordable and accessible. And that starts by building on the decades-long leadership of Chairman Wyden and others in Congress to enact legislation that holds PBMs accountable,” said Mark Blum, Managing Director of the PBM Accountability Project.

Oregonians support a number of specific legislative policy provisions to regulate PBMs, including:

- Requiring that insurance plans (like employer health plans) pay PBMs only a simple flat fee for their services, prohibiting PBMs from charging additional fees that ultimately get passed on to patients (81% support)
- Changing how PBMs profit so it’s not connected to the price of prescription drugs and they are not incentivized to drive up prices for patients (84% support)
- Requiring PBMs to pass discounts along to patients that they get from negotiating with prescription drug manufacturers (85% support)
- Introducing more transparency into PBMs’ contracts and the prescription drug pricing process (86% support)

“Likely voters in Oregon strongly support a variety of specific policy proposals to rein in PBMs – regardless of their political party affiliation,” said David Mermin, Lake Research Partners. “Further, they want their political leaders in Congress and state legislatures to take action with 8 out of 10 more likely to vote for a candidate who supports regulation rather than one who wants to keep the status quo.”

The online survey was conducted from Feb. 6-13, 2023, and reached a total of 205 likely November 2024 voters in Oregon, fielded concurrently with a national survey of 1,049 likely voters.

Questionable PBM business practices have been previously reported in the state. For example, the Oregon State Pharmacy Association issued a recent study that showed that PBMs were reimbursing pharmacies at unsustainable rates, leading to closures of small, independent pharmacies. At the same time, PBMs were charging the state's Medicare and Medicaid programs exorbitant prices, making the state pay more than eight times the manufacturer's asking price for a generic multiple sclerosis drug.

The PBM Accountability Project, a partnership of stakeholders across healthcare, labor, business, pharmacy and consumer/patient advocacy, is working to educate the public and advance solutions to help redirect prescription drug savings from PBMs back to patients, employers, health plans and taxpayers.