



February 26, 2025

Senate Committee on Health Care

RE: Support for Senate Bill 533

Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden, and members of the Senate Committee on Health Care,

My name is Nic Powers and I am the CEO of Winding Waters Clinic, a non-profit Community Health Center serving frontier Wallowa County. Our organization provides comprehensive medical, dental, and mental health care to more than 60% of Wallowa County residents every year.

As you know, in Wallowa County, access to healthcare is limited by geographic isolation and significant economic challenges. The 340B Drug Pricing Program allows safety-net organizations like Winding Waters to buy medications at a discount so that we can provide access to medications for patients who would not otherwise be able to afford them. We use any additional savings in accordance with federal law to sustain additional services for our community. However, in recent years, we have lost much of those 340B savings due to sweeping, disproportionate program changes by drug manufacturers.

In May 2020, Eli Lilly announced that Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) must choose only a single contract pharmacy where patients can access 340B medications, undermining the program and putting vulnerable communities at risk. Since 2020, twenty-three additional drug manufacturers have restricted Health Centers to one or two contract pharmacies through which to receive 340B program medications.

These actions force patients to travel across town or across an entire county to access affordable, lifesaving medication. For our patients in Wallowa County, this can mean driving over 60 miles on mountain roads that are often hazardous in winter. When essential medications are not accessible and affordable, patients suffer.

Senate Bill 533 will prevent pharmaceutical manufacturers from imposing restrictions on the number of contract pharmacies where Health Center patients can receive discounted 340B medications. This bill is a small but important step in helping to protect medication access and Health Center services for all Oregonians.

As such, I respectfully request your support for Senate Bill 533.

Sincerely,

Nicolas Powers
Chief Executive Officer