

Health Department

February 25, 2025

To: Senate Committee on Health Care

From: Jenna Green, Interim Executive Director of Multnomah County Community Health Center
Michele Koder, Pharmacy Director

Re: Support for Senate Bill 533

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our comments in support of Senate Bill 533, which seeks to prohibit drug manufacturers from imposing restrictions on access to 340B drugs in pharmacy locations that have a contractual agreement with a covered entity, and to create a civil penalty for drug manufacturers that require covered entities to submit utilization review data as a condition of acquiring, delivering, or dispensing 340B drugs.

Multnomah County's Community Health Center is the largest public federally qualified health center in Oregon and provides integrated health care services to over 56,000 patients a year through our seven primary care clinics; seven pharmacies; seven dental clinics; a Health Services Center that provides tailored care for individuals living with HIV; a mobile health clinic supporting individuals in low income and transitional housing, and our nine Student Health Centers.

Pharmacy services are a critical component of the health care that we provide to our patients, as we dispense nearly 400,000 prescriptions per year. Our seven pharmacies are covered entity owned pharmacies participating in the 340B Drug Pricing Program and are essential to the population that we serve, as many of those utilizing our pharmacy services would not have comparable access to affordable medications in our absence. Our pharmacies are co-located with our clinical service sites, which provide patients visiting our clinics with onsite access points to affordable medications necessary to maintain their health.

While many of our patients are able to conveniently access their medications at one of our health center operated pharmacies, a significant number of patients - particularly those who have chronic illnesses, behavioral health needs, disabilities, transportation barriers, or are accessing telehealth services - may be better served by pharmacies that are closer to where they work or live. Additionally, budgetary constraints limit the hours of operation for our pharmacies, and the inability to offer extended hours can impact access for working individuals and families. The goal of our healthcare system should be to make accessing care, inclusive of necessary medications, as convenient as

possible - and yet the arrangements we have had with local retail pharmacies in the past to expand our reach and improve access to low cost medications for our patients have not been sustainable due to drug manufacturer restrictions that limit access to 340B drugs in those locations. Despite the obligation for manufacturers who benefit from Medicaid program participation to also participate in the 340B program, the drug industry has identified and used loopholes to restrict meaningful access to many (often for our most vulnerable patients) - and the lack of explicit program guidance has allowed manufacturers to create barriers that disadvantage patients. Lack of convenient access to medications puts our patients' health at risk, as they may delay filling a prescription or miss doses, which creates a potential for increased costs in other parts of our health care system.

Our health center would like to enter into agreements with other pharmacies in our service area to make necessary medications readily available to our patients in their preferred location, but manufacturer restrictions continue to grow and render us unable to enter into partnerships to expand access points. SB 533 is necessary to hold manufacturers accountable for their obligations within the 340B program, and we urge you to support this legislation to better meet the needs of Oregonians. In addition to what is outlined in the introduced bill, we would appreciate clarity that legislative intent includes the ability of covered entities to contract with multiple pharmacies. Current restrictions imposed by manufacturers have been applied to both specific drug products as well as the number of pharmacies with which a covered entity can contract - which is unreasonable given the structure of retail pharmacies.

The Multnomah County Community Health Center appreciates your consideration of this important legislation, and we strongly urge you to advance SB 533 to ensure that access to 340B medication is available as intended to best serve eligible Oregonians. Please do not hesitate to contact Laura Blanke at laura.blanke@multco.us or 512-673-9559 if you have questions or if we can be of any further assistance.

Thank you,

Jenna Green, MHA
Interim Executive Director
Multnomah County Community Health Center

Michele Koder, PharmD, RPh
Pharmacy Director
Multnomah County Community Health Center