

Dear Chair Meek and Members of the Committee,

As a dedicated pharmacist serving Oregonians in rural Eastern Oregon, I am writing to express my **strong support for Senate Bill 707**, which expands Oregon's **Corporate Activities Tax (CAT) exemption**. The CAT disproportionately burdens pharmacies, jeopardizing patient access to essential medications and healthcare services.

Community pharmacies are uniquely affected by the CAT. Unlike most businesses, pharmacies cannot set their own prices—these are dictated by pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) and other third-party payers. Pharmacies must adhere to contractual reimbursement rates and cannot pass additional costs to patients. Meanwhile, drug wholesalers and manufacturers increase prices to offset their own CAT obligations, leaving pharmacies effectively **double-taxed**:

1. **When purchasing medications** from suppliers, and
2. **When dispensing those medications** to patients.

This excessive tax burden threatens the financial viability of pharmacies across Oregon. As pharmacies close or reduce hours to stay afloat, patients face dangerous delays in receiving their medications—delays that can compromise health outcomes. A recent Associated Press report ranked Oregon **second worst in the nation** for patient access to pharmacies. Many rural pharmacies have been designated as **Critical Access Pharmacies** by the Oregon Health Authority, underscoring their vital role in their communities. Len's Pharmacy, where I am the manager, is one of the Critical Access Pharmacies. We are the only pharmacy for 70 miles and our services are essential and we have seen how the CAT tax reduces our ability to serve our patients. With the exception that we currently have it allows us to have the proper hours and staff to serve our patients.

Passing SB 707 is essential to safeguarding pharmacy services for all Oregonians. I urge you to support this bill to ensure that patients—regardless of where they live—can access affordable, timely healthcare.

Thank you for your consideration and leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Tilli Slusarenko, PharmD/MBA

Pharmacy Manager

Len's Pharmacy