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Members, Senate Committee on Health Care
Filed Electronically

Re: ***OPPOSE SB 441***

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden and Committee Members:

Respectfully, Amgen must join fellow healthcare stakeholders in opposition to SB 441, unless amended.

Amgen's perspective is informed by our status as a top-ranked biosimilar manufacturer globally, with a portfolio of 11 biosimilar medicines approved or in development. We believe that biosimilars have the potential to offer more affordable biologic treatment options for patients and providers, minimize the risk of shortages within therapeutic areas, drive cost savings through increased competition between biosimilars and reference products (the original, FDA-approved version of these medicines), and promote a more sustainable healthcare marketplace overall.

Many patients managing chronic medical conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, and various forms of cancer have worked diligently to achieve stability on a biologic medication, often trying different therapies to achieve optimal management. These patients rely on biologics for their therapy management, which requires precise and consistent administration. Current Oregon law, like laws in other states, permits pharmacists to substitute interchangeable biological products. This practice is facilitated by patient notification, ensuring transparency and supporting the careful monitoring needed for these patients.

The proposal in SB 441 to eliminate Oregon's requirement for patient notification of substitution would remove a vital tool that supports patient therapeutic management and pharmacovigilance—the practice of monitoring the safety of medicines and taking action to reduce risks and increase benefits for patients. Biologics dispensed at the pharmacy tend to be administered via self-injection. Substitution could occur among biologics with differences in delivery devices, instructions for use of the delivery devices, or routes of administration, particularly because a biosimilar may not always be approved and marketed for all the dosage forms or routes of administration of the reference product. Providing notice to the patient of substitution can help alert the patient to potential formulation, delivery device, or administration differences. This notification is crucial, as it helps the patient or physician attribute any adverse events to the appropriate product for purposes of pharmacovigilance.

Proposals like the one in SB 441 to remove current-law patient communication requirements could undermine important safeguards in the pharmacy substitution framework. Ensuring that patients are informed about their medication is essential for their safety, well-being, and the success of their treatment. It builds trust.

At Amgen, we believe investing in biosimilar development will offer more affordable treatment options for patients and health systems as well as free up resources to invest and budget for new innovations. We support efforts by all stakeholders in the healthcare ecosystem to help ensure that patients have access to potentially lower-cost treatment options – and are happy to work with you to explore further options to expand patient access to biosimilars.

Respectfully,

Tim Martin

Tim Martin
Director, United State Government Affairs