

Submitter: Kelly Rose Lavery
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB42
March 14, 2025

Senate Committee On Health Care
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kelly Rose Lavery and I am a parent and advocate writing to you today in support of Senate Bill 42 and the -1 amendment. Vaccines prevent mass outbreaks, eradicate diseases, and ultimately save lives. But right now, access to vaccines is at risk for many across our state.

I care deeply about access to vaccines in Oregon because they have been overwhelmingly and repeatedly shown to reduce infection, transmission, and death or other significant consequences of infectious diseases. Vaccines are an incredibly important tool in maintaining the health of our population, especially our children, elderly, and other vulnerable populations. Those who are not able to be vaccinated – whether due to being too young or too medically fragile – are protected by those of us who are vaccinated.

Additionally, a core Oregonian value is choice – every single Oregonian should have the ability and opportunity to access vaccines if they choose to. Limiting vaccine access limits the rights of Oregonians to make medical decisions for themselves and their families, further harming our most vulnerable community members.

Oregon's Vaccine Access Program (VAP) is absolutely critical to the health of Oregonians, and right now it is at risk of being significantly underfunded. This kind of massive reduction – currently estimated to be 65-70% of enrolled clinics – will threaten vaccine access statewide and particularly for low-income populations, rural communities, and historically marginalized groups.

This potential funding reduction comes at the worst possible time. Last year, our communities saw the highest number of measles cases in 30 years and the largest pertussis outbreak in the last 50 years with over 1,000 cases. Meanwhile, childhood immunization rates are at the lowest we've seen in Oregon since 2018.

Please take action to protect the health of Oregonians.

Vote yes on Senate Bill 42 and the -1 amendment.

Thank you,

Kelly Rose Lavery