

Submitter: Shay Hosseinion
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB42

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Dear Community Member,

I am a neighborhood Family Physician practicing in a small clinic in Southeast Portland, Oregon for 19 years. In my practice I am the primary care provider for both children and adults. My patients call me "Doctor Shay".

While pediatric care is financially challenging because of the cost of purchasing vaccines, I continue to offer this service to my community because it is the right thing to do and of course I love working with the kids. The financial challenge of the cost of vaccines, though, has always made me question how long I can afford the financial challenges that purchasing vaccines presents us.

In my small practice, I often won't use all 10 doses of a vaccine in a box before it expires, and I can't order less than 10 doses of most vaccines from regular suppliers.

A recent example came up where last year, I only used 5 of the 10 covid vaccines I ordered for young children, and the supplier didn't reimburse me with any credit towards future vaccines. This year I was afraid I could not afford to purchase another box of 10 and only use 3 or 4 doses and have the rest as a \$900 loss. I talked with the Oregon Immunization Program, and the Vaccines for Children program, and after a lot of back and forth, I was finally able to purchase 2 doses from another clinic for 2 children that will need them in my clinic.

The Vaccine Access Program is designed for exactly small clinics like mine; where

we only pay them for the vaccines that we use. Our clinic went through all the training and prep to qualify for this program, but once we were ready to enroll, we were told that we couldn't be enrolled because there wasn't enough funding to enroll new clinics. I understand that the funding provided to this program originally has run out and needs to be renewed before they can enroll my clinic. This program would be a game changer for us, making medical practice for pediatrics financially viable enough to not have worry about needing to stop providing vaccinations all together (and therefore not be able to provide pediatric primary care).

My clinic represents a unique access point to preventative healthcare; it is in an 1891 Victorian house where the exam rooms are cozy with wood floors, inviting to those that might not otherwise even go to the doctor. We attract a diverse cross section of patients, some of whom might be otherwise hesitant to vaccinate, so we have a unique opportunity to help educate our patients of the benefits of vaccination, especially at a time when rates of vaccination are low and we are seeing the recurrence of vaccine preventable diseases in our community because of low vaccination rates: Measles, Polio, Whooping Cough.

-1 Amendment to Senate Bill 42 would provide the funding for the Vaccine Access Program and would help small neighborhood clinics like mine (and pharmacies) maintain access to vaccinations, and create a critical gateway to our state's communities' access to vaccinations.

Thank you for your consideration of supporting this vitally important bill.

Sincerely,
Doctor Shay

Shahram "Shay" Hosseinion MD