



March 13, 2025

Senate Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for Senate Bill 42 (-1 Amendment) – Urgent Action Needed to Protect Vaccine Access in Oregon

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

The Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians strongly supports Senate Bill 42 and its -1 Amendment, which will provide essential bridge funding for the Oregon Health Authority's Vaccine Access Program. Without this critical funding, the program faces a projected 65-70% reduction in currently enrolled clinics, drastically limiting access to vaccines—particularly for low-income populations, rural communities, and historically marginalized groups.

As primary care providers, many naturopathic physicians rely on the Vaccine Access Program to offer immunizations in their small, community-based clinics. This program allows NDs to participate in initiatives like the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, ensuring that children from underserved populations receive necessary immunizations at no cost to their families. Without this funding, many naturopathic clinics would be unable to provide vaccines, leaving significant gaps in preventive healthcare across the state.

The Urgent Need for Action

Oregon is currently facing a public health crisis, with declining immunization rates and increasing outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases. In the past year alone:

- Oregon experienced the highest number of measles cases in 30 years.
- The state saw the largest pertussis (whooping cough) outbreak in 50 years, with over 1,000 cases.



These trends make it clear: This is the worst possible time to reduce vaccine access in Oregon. Senate Bill 42 will provide the necessary bridge funding to keep the Vaccine Access Program operational while Oregon works toward a sustainable long-term funding model for immunization programs.

Why This Matters to Naturopathic Physicians

Naturopathic physicians serve as trusted primary care providers across Oregon, including in areas where access to conventional healthcare services is limited. Many of our members operate small, independent clinics that serve as critical healthcare access points for families in their communities. The Vaccine Access Program enables NDs to offer essential immunizations that they otherwise would not be able to afford to stock and administer. Losing this funding would disproportionately affect small clinics, further restricting vaccine access at a time when we should be expanding it.

We urge the Oregon Legislature to pass Senate Bill 42 with the -1 Amendment to ensure continued and equitable access to vaccines for all Oregonians. The health of our communities depends on it.

Thank you for your leadership in protecting public health. OANP stands ready to support this effort in any way possible.

Sincerely,
Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians