



OREGON COALITION OF LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

Representing the collective interests
of Oregon's 33 local public health
authorities to improve the health of
all Oregonians.

oregonclho.org

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Dear Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah Lochner, I'm the Executive Director of the Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials, commonly known as CLHO. CLHO is the state association for Oregon's 33 Local Public Health entities.

The Vaccine Access Program (VAP) has been critical to my members' ability to provide timely vaccinations to people in communities across Oregon because it eliminates the up-front costs of purchasing vaccines and provides them at a lower bulk rate price. As such, CLHO is in strong support of SB 42 with the -1 amendment.

Without the funding proposed in SB 42-1, Oregon faces a potential 65-70% reduction in participating clinics, of which there are currently over 300. Rural communities which already experience health care access challenges would be most impacted. In rural communities, often the Local Public Health Department is the **ONLY** access to clinical health services, including vaccines, without having to travel long distances.

The timing couldn't be more crucial. In 2024, Oregon saw its highest number of measles cases in 30 years and over 1,000 pertussis cases -- the largest outbreak in 50 years. Our pediatric immunization rates are at their lowest since 2018. We cannot afford to lose this vital program now.

SB 42-1 provides a \$5 million allocation for vaccine purchases and \$1.8 million for program administration which is a smart investment in Oregon's public health infrastructure. Because the program replenishes immunization funds through quarterly billing, this one-time investment in the purchase of vaccines will have lasting benefits for our communities. Additionally, the Oregon Health Authority has committed to continuing the work the Vaccine Finance Reform Steering Committee, which began last year to explore more sustainable models for vaccine financing that the state could implement in the future.

CLHO urges you to support SB 42 and the -1 amendment to protect access to vital immunization services for Oregonians.

Thank you.

