



CHILDREN'S HEALTH *alliance*

DATE: March 25, 2025

TO: Senator Deb Patterson, Chair
Senate Committee on Health Care

FROM: Resa Bradeen, MD
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SUBJECT: SB 42 – Funding for Oregon's Vaccine Access Program

Chair Patterson and members of the Committee, the Children's Health Alliance supports the -1 amendment to SB 42 and the critical funding it will provide for Oregon's Vaccine Access Program (VAP).

The Children's Health Alliance 180+ pediatricians care for approximately 190,000 children and their families in the Portland metro area and Salem and are committed to improving the health of all Oregon's children. Together, our pediatricians serve over 52,000 Medicaid members.

The Children's Health Alliance has consistently been a champion and advocate of immunizations in Oregon through participation on the Immunization Policy Advisory Team (IPAT) and the Vaccine Finance Steering Committee in addition to the focus of improved vaccination rates for our patients. Immunizations are a priority for our pediatricians, and equitable access through the Vaccine Access Program is critical to overcoming any barriers for providers or patients to accessing the vaccines they need.

The VAP has been essential to our state's ability to provide timely vaccinations to all in the community because it eliminates the up-front costs of purchasing vaccines for providers of vulnerable and underserved populations. Funding this program is an important step to achieve Oregon's priority to eliminate health disparities by 2030.



Without it, providers eager to provide this important service will be unable to do so due to financial constraints.

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.

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, and need to reach patients across the state.

SB 42-1's \$5 million allocation for vaccine purchases and \$1.8 million for program administration represents 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 began last year to explore more sustainable models for vaccine financing that the state could implement in the future.

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