

March 21, 2025

Dear Chairman Nosse, Vice-Chairs Javadi and Nelson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Teresa Jankus and I live in Portland. I am writing to you to express my support for HB 3421, a bill that requires insurance coverage for biomarker testing.

I strongly and wholeheartedly believe in the prevention of disease rather than the treatment of disease, whenever possible. This is how I try to live my life. Not only do I think prevention is a better approach for our bodies and overall health. I think prevention has the potential to reduce the overall cost of healthcare and the strain on our healthcare system.

One such disease I wish to see more preventative measures for is Alzheimer's disease. I'm sure like some of you, my family, friends and I have been affected by the disease. Two important and impactful women in my life suffered from dementia. I watched – helpless, heartbroken and scared – as these vibrant, accomplished and fiercely independent woman became shells of their former selves. I knew I had to do something to help prevent others from experiencing the devastation of this disease and that's why I lend my support to the Alzheimer's Association's mission to raise awareness about the disease, to support those suffering from it and their caregivers, and to find a cure for this disease.

Today, more than 80,000 Oregonians are living with Alzheimer's disease, but as many as half of them are not formally diagnosed. An early and accurate diagnosis of Alzheimer's can improve access to care and support services, enhance quality of life and reduce the financial impact of the disease.

This bill, HB 3421, mandates that insurance cover biomarker testing when that testing is medically indicated and consistent with clinical practice guidelines, and provided in a manner that limits the need for multiple biopsies or specimen samples. The bill is structured to be good for patients and cost-effective for Oregon.

With the historic FDA approval of treatments that slow the progression of the disease, early detection and diagnosis of Alzheimer's are even more critical to ensure individuals receive the most benefit at the earliest point possible.

There have been recent advancements in science, including a combined blood test for cognitive decline that has shown a 90% accuracy rate in determining whether memory loss is due to Alzheimer's disease, according to one study. While these results are very encouraging for the future, there is currently no single test that can determine if a person is living with Alzheimer's or another dementia. And the journey to receive a dementia

diagnosis is often long and arduous, robbing individuals and their families of precious time. Current biomarker testing can speed diagnosis by an average of two years.

Finally, continued progress around blood-based amyloid biomarkers is likely to lead to new diagnostic tools coming to market within the next couple of years.

Thank you for hearing this important bill. Please, will you support it?

Teresa Jankus