

March 20, 2025

TO: Senate Committee on Health Care
FROM: Ali King, Our Children Oregon
SUBJECT: Support for SB 42

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

My name is Ali King and I am the Policy and Advocacy Director for Our Children Oregon (OCO), a statewide organization that champions equitable policies and opportunities for every child by leveraging data and research. The Children's Agenda, convened annually by OCO, brings together more than 135 organizations statewide to create a holistic legislative agenda dedicated to improving the wellbeing of Oregon's children, youth, and families.

As a coalition of child and family advocates, health care workers, educators, administrators, parents, and policy experts, we have seen firsthand the devastating impact of decreased vaccine rates on children and communities. Last year, our communities saw the highest number of measles cases in 30 years¹ and the largest pertussis outbreak in the last 50 years with over 1,000 cases.² Meanwhile, childhood immunization rates are at the lowest we've seen in Oregon since 2018.

¹ CDC Data on Oregon Measles Outbreak: <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/data-research/index.htm>

² "Oregon's pertussis case numbers highest in more than 50 years"
<https://www.opb.org/article/2025/01/02/oregon-pertussis-case-numbers-2024>

Currently, in Texas and New Mexico, measles is surging, infecting hundreds of people. Dozens have been hospitalized with serious cases and a 6-year-old unvaccinated child and an unvaccinated adult recently died. These were tragic and preventable deaths.

Vaccination is one of the most important ways to keep children healthy and to safeguard public health. This is a very dangerous time to risk vaccine access in Oregon.

The current Vaccine Access program will face an estimated reduction of 65–70% of currently enrolled clinics.³ This kind of reduction will threaten vaccine access statewide and particularly for low-income populations, rural communities, and historically marginalized groups. The impact of this will be devastating, and potentially deadly, for many Oregonians.

We appreciate the work you do to support Oregon's children and families and we strongly urge you to take action to protect the health of Oregonians by voting yes on SB 42 and the -1 amendment.

Sincerely,



Ali King

Policy and Advocacy Director

Our Children Oregon

View the [2025 Children's Agenda](#)

³ This estimation was provided by the current program staff with the note that it is a high-level, simplified estimate.