

March 6, 2025

Dear Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee:

My name is James Macfarlane, and I am a Captain with the Columbia County Sheriff's Office in St. Helens, Oregon. I am writing today in support of the -1 amendment to SB 42 and the critical funding it will provide for Oregon's Vaccine Access Program (VAP). I manage the Corrections Division for our County's Sheriff and, as such work, with our medical program providing medical care to Adults in Custody (AIC).

The VAP has assisted our ability to provide timely vaccinations to people in our incarcerated population. Historically we must fund these services out of pocket unless grants or funding can be sourced, and these can be challenging procurements. During the Covid-19 pandemic we were able to connect with and work with community-partners to come into our facility and vaccinate staff and adults in custody requesting to be vaccinated. More recently, we were just able to partner with an OHA funding source and purchase seasonal flu vaccines for our AIC population.

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. 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.

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

Sincerely,



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