

Submitter:

L F

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB42

Dear Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee,

My name is L and I am an educator who works in schools throughout the Portland Metro area. I am grateful to have access to vaccines such as the influenza vaccine because it helps me to continue to do my job and support students. I see so many students who are sick at school and I know there would be so many more getting sick if not for childhood vaccines and yearly seasonal boosters.

Therefore, I am writing to you today in support of Senate Bill 42 and the -2 amendment. Vaccines prevent mass outbreaks, eradicate diseases, and ultimately save lives.

Oregon's Vaccine Access Program (VAP) is absolutely critical to the health of Oregonians, and right now it is at risk of being significantly underfunded. This kind of massive funding reduction – currently estimated to be 65-70% of enrolled clinics – will threaten vaccine access statewide and particularly for low-income populations, rural communities, and historically marginalized groups.

This potential funding reduction comes at the worst possible time. Last year, our communities saw the highest number of measles cases in 30 years and the largest pertussis outbreak in the last 50 years with over 1,000 cases. Meanwhile, childhood immunization rates are at the lowest we've seen in Oregon since 2018. The efficacy of vaccines is being questioned and access to vaccines is being threatened on a federal level. The state of Oregon must take the protection of vaccines into our own hands.

Please take action to protect the health of Oregonians.

Vote yes on Senate Bill 42 and the -1 amendment.

Thank you,

LF