

March 25, 2025

Senate Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee,

The undersigned organizations write to express strong support of SB 42-2, which would provide critical funding to maintain and expand Oregon's [Vaccine Access Program](#) (VAP).

Oregon is facing an urgent public health challenge. Our pediatric immunization rates have dropped to their lowest levels since 2018. Meanwhile, 2024 has brought the highest number of measles cases in 30 years and the largest pertussis outbreak in 50 years, with over 1,000 cases. Older adults, whose immunization needs differ from children and younger adults, face barriers to access including transportation and increasing health care costs. Now is not the time to risk losing vital access points to affordable, preventative health care.

The VAP allows eligible providers to access immunizations without upfront costs, billing them quarterly for vaccines administered to insured patients. By purchasing vaccines in bulk, the program achieves lower prices than individual providers could obtain independently. This reduces barriers to providing immunizations, generates cost savings, and allows patients to access immunizations at the location that makes the most sense for them. This may be at their primary care provider's office, their local health department, or their preferred pharmacy. We believe that Oregonians should be able to access the right care, at the right time, in the right place, and at the right cost and the VAP program is one way to ensure that that is possible for people seeking immunizations.

Without immediate action, the VAP faces an estimated reduction of 65-70% of its over 300 currently enrolled clinics – a loss of hundreds of community access points. This would particularly affect low-wage and rural communities, as well as historically marginalized groups. Currently, dozens of eligible providers are waitlisted to join the program. To be clear, SB 42-2 is not a vaccination mandate or incentive program and does not seek to amend existing law on vaccine administration. This legislation solely seeks to preserve and expand vaccination sites across the state for people who want them.

SB 42-1 proposes a sustainable solution by allocating:

- \$5 million for vaccine purchases
- \$1.8 million for program administration during the 2025-2027 biennium

Through the quarterly billing process, vaccine purchase funds will be automatically replenished over time, making this a truly one-time investment that will have lasting impact on Oregon's public health infrastructure. 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.

Investing in this program is a smart choice – it will reduce hospitalization rates for preventable diseases, decrease long-term care costs from complications resulting from preventable illness, and, overall, lower health care costs to the system and to Oregonians.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge your support of SB 42 and the -2 amendment.

Sincerely,

