



To Chair Paterson, Vice Chair Hayden, and members of the Senate Committee on Health Care,

We are members of the Multnomah County Democrats' Criminal Justice Study Group, and we support SB 293 with the inclusion of Amendment 1.

The troubling and woefully inadequate state of medical services inside Oregon's prisons has been well researched and documented in recent months. The community at large now understands what incarcerated adults have experienced for years – the unique health challenges in prison due to limited access to healthcare, poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, punitive staff culture, and a generally harsh living environment, has resulted in serious and debilitating medical conditions, as well as inhuman and dire negative health consequences, including death.

The question now is, what are we going to do about this problem?

SB 293-1 would take meaningful and much needed steps towards addressing the shamefully deficient state of healthcare within Oregon's prisons. The bill would require the Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC) to:

1. **Provide medical care to adults in custody for pre-existing medical conditions.** Currently, ODOC refuses to continue care for a person if the condition needing treatment existed prior to incarceration.
2. **Not consider the remaining duration of incarceration for an adult in custody in medical care decisions.** Currently, ODOC can refuse care, no matter the health of the person and without consideration of the negative health consequences of delaying care, based on how much time the person has left before their release from prison. This not only jeopardizes the health of the incarcerated Oregonian, but also the health and welfare of the community to which they are released.
3. **Document the specific reasons for any denial or refusal of medical care in the adult in custody's file.** ODOC does not consistently record specific reasons for its decision to deny or refuse medical care for adults in custody.
4. **Provide adults in custody access to, at a minimum, prescriptions listed on the formulary adopted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in effect on 01 June 2025.** This would bring ODOC in line with the current formulary guidance provided by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Ensuring that adults in custody receive appropriate and comprehensive medical care is not just a moral and legal obligation, but also a sensible step towards reducing recidivism and promoting a healthier society, as more than 95% of incarcerated people will eventually return to our broader communities.

For all of these reasons and more we strongly urge you to support and vote “Yes” on the amendment and then vote "Yes" on SB 293.

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