



February 9, 2026

Re: SB 1598: Vaccine access
Position: Support

Chair Patterson and members of the Senate Health Care Committee:

On behalf of Oregon's 33 county-based public health authorities, I urge you to support SB 1598.

SB 1598 updates references to federal recommendations in Oregon's statutes to allow for Oregon-specific recommendations. We believe this will ensure that our recommendations come from trusted medical sources that are based in science.

SB 1598 will preserve insurance coverage for vaccines and protections for vaccine providers. With many pediatricians unable to access vaccines not available under the Vaccines For Children program, we need to offer families as many options as possible to get their children access to vaccines. Other members of the West Coast Health Alliance, including California and Washington, have taken similar action to ensure Oregon families retain access to vaccines. As such, this legislation is critical to maintaining vaccine access in Oregon.

In Oregon, only 86% of Kindergarteners were fully vaccinated in the 2024-25 school year, putting Oregon kids at risk for infection. In order to reach community immunity, we need 95% to be fully inoculated.

What is the cost of an outbreak?

Across states, the average cost per case of a measles outbreak is \$43,000 – but it can be as high as \$243,000. In 2019, the Clark County, Washington, measles outbreak cost approximately \$2.3 million for the public health response, \$76,000 in direct medical costs, and \$1 million in productivity loss. **Total cost: \$3.4 million.**

If Oregon doesn't invest in vaccine access, we will see this cost multiplied across the state as each community battles outbreak after outbreak. The first step, however, is passing SB 1598. We urge your support. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sarah J Lochner
Executive Director
Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials

