

Submitter: Stacie Camou
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1598

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB1598. This bill grants sweeping authority to a state public health officer to issue a standing order that would apply to all Oregonians, including directives related to vaccination. While I recognize the importance of public health preparedness, concentrating this level of power in a single unelected position raises serious concerns about medical autonomy, informed consent, and governmental overreach.

Healthcare decisions are deeply personal and should remain a collaborative process between individuals, their families, and their trusted medical providers. Policies that appear to bypass this relationship risk eroding public trust at a time when transparency and partnership are more important than ever. True public health success depends on informed participation, not broad mandates that may be perceived as coercive.

Additionally, SB1598 lacks sufficient guardrails, legislative oversight, and clearly defined limits on how such standing orders could be implemented. Granting indefinite or expansive authority without robust checks and balances creates the potential for unintended consequences and sets a concerning precedent for future policymaking. Oregonians value both community well-being and individual rights. These principles are not mutually exclusive. Effective public health strategies can and should be pursued in ways that respect personal choice, encourage education, and maintain accountability through elected representatives.

I urge you to oppose SB1598 or, at minimum, substantially amend the bill to ensure stronger protections for informed consent, clearer legislative oversight, and meaningful public input before any statewide standing order is enacted.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your careful consideration of the long-term implications this legislation may have for the people of Oregon.

Sincerely,
Stacie Camou