

Submitter: Kelly Singhose

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1598

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kelly Singhose, and I serve as the Interim Director of the Harney County Health Department and the Clinic Manager of High Country Health and Wellness Center. Our clinic provides primary care services in Harney County, one of Oregon's most rural and frontier counties.

I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 1598, the Vaccine Insurance Bill.

Harney County currently has the highest two-year-old vaccination rate in the state of Oregon. This success did not happen by chance. It is the direct result of years of trust-building between our providers and the community we serve, consistent vaccine recommendations, and ongoing conversations addressing safety, effectiveness, and individual concerns. In a frontier county like ours, relationships are everything—and trusted local healthcare access is critical to maintaining high vaccination rates.

Despite this success, the financial reality of providing vaccines in a rural primary care setting is increasingly challenging. Current vaccine reimbursement rates often do not cover the true cost of the vaccine itself or the associated administration, storage, staffing, and reporting requirements. As a result, our health department and clinic are sometimes forced to subsidize vaccine delivery using general fund dollars. While we believe deeply that vaccine access is essential to public health, this model is not sustainable—particularly for small, rural, and frontier providers.

Senate Bill 1598 is an important step toward ensuring that healthcare providers are adequately reimbursed for vaccine costs and administration. Fair and predictable reimbursement will help clinics like ours continue offering vaccines locally, without forcing patients to travel long distances or face delays in care. Most importantly, it helps preserve access in communities where losing a single service can have outsized impacts on health outcomes.

Maintaining Oregon's strong vaccination rates—especially in rural and frontier areas—depends on supporting the providers who deliver this care on the ground every day. I urge you to support Senate Bill 1598 and invest in the sustainability of vaccine access for all Oregonians.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelly Singhose
Interim Director
Harney County Health Department

Clinic Manager
High Country Health and Wellness Center
Harney County, Oregon