



# PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE MAJORITY

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## **Oregon House Tackles Opioid Epidemic** *Establishes pilot project to begin addressing the issue*

SALEM – With an opioid epidemic plaguing communities across Oregon, the Oregon House of Representatives late Thursday passed House Bill 4143 which establishes a pilot project to tackle the issue.

The pilot would determine the effectiveness of immediate access to evidence-based treatment for persons who overdose on opioids. This includes using peer recovery support mentors to facilitate the link between the emergency department and appropriate treatment and resources.

“This is a serious problem plaguing too many Oregonians and too many communities,” said Rep. Sheri Malstrom (D-Beaverton) who carried the bill on the floor. Opioids, when used properly, can provide patients with much needed pain relief. Sadly, these medications, when used improperly can devastate lives, families, and communities. I am proud to support HB 4143A.”

According to the Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division, Oregon has one of the highest rates of prescription opioid misuse in the nation. On average, three Oregonians die every week from prescription opioid overdoses, and many more develop opioid use disorders.

This legislation, a priority for Gov. Kate Brown, builds off the work she started in 2017 with the creation of the Opioid Epidemic Task Force. The task force brought forth this legislation with the intention of tackling this epidemic with a multi-pronged approach.

Oregon House Democrats are committed to ensuring that every Oregonian has access to quality, affordable health care, that includes ensuring Oregon is doing everything it can to combat the opioid addiction epidemic.

The legislation, which passed unanimously, now goes to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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