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Prescription Drug Price Transparency Passes House

Bill seeks to provide more information, lower costs

SALEM – As the price of prescription drugs skyrocket nationwide, the Oregon House of Representatives today passed [House Bill 4005](#), which creates a statewide prescription drug cost and price transparency program.

The legislation, aimed at providing consumers more information and requiring drug manufacturers to justify cost increases, was championed by Rep. Rob Nosse (D-Portland).

“This legislation will help us take the first step, a step we need to take to begin to get at the fastest growing expense we have in health care – prescription drug costs,” Rep. Nosse said. “Oregonians deserve to have transparency in something as vital to good health as prescription drugs. My hope is that this legislation will set us down a path to making health care more affordable for everyone.”

The legislation requires prescription drug manufacturers to report information regarding qualifying prescription drugs, including production, marketing, and research costs, to the Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS). Companies could face civil penalties for failing to comply with the reporting.

“The prescription drug market is a dysfunctional, with manufacturers operating with big payers held hostage to profiteering,” said Rep. Andrea Salinas (D-Lake Oswego). “House Bill 4005 won’t send prescription drug prices plummeting, but it will help us unveil the truth behind the cost drivers when drug manufacturers set the initial price.”

According to research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, from 2013 to 2015, national spending on prescription drugs increased by approximately 20 percent and accounted for an estimated 17 percent of health care spending.

“I believe we owe it to every Oregonian to make progress on this issue and this legislation will shine the light on how drug prices are truly set, providing answers to patients struggling to pay for their medications,” said Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn), a sponsor of the bill. “I think this is an important step forward for every Oregonian.”

During the floor debate, Rep. Mark Meek (D-Gladstone) talked about his own family experiences dealing with out-of-control prescription drug prices.

“No Oregonian deserves to be priced out of their health,” Rep. Meek said. “This legislation takes critical first steps in bringing patients more transparency on the price of their prescriptions.”

A bipartisan group of legislators sponsored the legislation, including House Democratic members Rep. Alonso Leon, Rep. Phil Barnhart (D-Eugene), Rep. Julie Fahey (D-West Eugene, Junction City, Bethel), Rep. Paul Holvey (D-Eugene), Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer (D-Portland), Rep. Tina Kotek (D-Portland), Rep. John Lively (D-Springfield), Rep. Susan McLain (D-Forest Grove), Rep. Meek, Rep. Karin Power (D-Milwaukie), Rep. Salinas, and Rep. Janeen Sollman (D-Hillsboro).

Oregon House Democrats are working to ensure that every Oregonian has access to quality, affordable health care, including pushing for lower prescription drug prices.

The legislation, which passed 46 to 14, now goes to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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