



NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

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CONTACT: Lindsey O'Brien
(503) 986-1907 or Lindsey.Obrien@state.or.us

New process to resolve health care disputes passes the House *SB 483 enables discussion and mediation between patients and providers*

SALEM – A bill that makes it easier to use mediation instead of lawsuits to resolve medical disputes passed the Oregon House today with strong bipartisan support.

Senate Bill 483 allows patients, health care facilities, or providers to confidentially report medical errors to the Oregon Patient Safety Commission. This process, known as Early Discussion and Mediation, allows the commission to suggest ways to mediate grievances and improve care, thereby reducing the volume of expensive malpractice lawsuits, improving the practice environment for doctors, and protecting patients' constitutional right to access justice.

“This legislation required unprecedented collaboration on the issue of medical liability – for a long time, no one thought it would be possible,” House Majority Leader Val Hoyle (D – Eugene) said. “Thanks to the hard work of the Governor’s Office, the Senate, and several of my colleagues, SB 483 is on its way to become a law that will help strengthen our health system.”

The Early Discussion and Mediation proposal has been endorsed by both the Oregon Medical Association and the Oregon Trial Lawyers Association. Both organizations worked together to find consensus in a workgroup on patient safety and defensive medicine convened by Governor John A. Kitzhaber under the direction of 2012’s Health Care Transformation Act (SB 1580).

SB 483 passed the House 55-1 with 4 members excused, and was co-sponsored by Rep. Chris Garrett (D – Lake Oswego) and Rep. Jason Conger, (R – Bend).

“I’m proud of the hard work and important conversations that led to the passing of this bill,” Rep. Garrett said. “Early Discussion and Mediation is a process that will lead to better health care and lower costs.”

The bill now goes to the Governor for his signature.

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