

## HB 3262: Regulating Psychotropics: Testimony to House

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Colleagues, House Bill 3262 comes to you unanimously<sup>i</sup> from your House Committee on Human Services and Housing. It's about the use of psychotropics in long-term care facilities. Psychotropic medication is defined in Oregon statute as medication with the prescribed intent to affect or alter thought process, mood or behavior. This includes but is not limited to antipsychotic, antidepressant, anxiolytic medication, and behavior medications. Current Oregon law requires the Department of Human Services to develop rules for use of psychotropic medications, only for children placed in foster care.

Inappropriate prescribing in such care facilities is a national problem; the drugs are being used improperly to address behavioral issues caused by dementia and developmental disabilities, including aggression, agitation, and delirium. Data indicates that antipsychotics are often used for individuals with dementia for long-term periods with limited monitoring of their effects. The data also shows that individuals with disabilities receive excessively high doses that exceed FDA recommendations, for unnecessarily long periods of time, and sometimes with inappropriate drug combinations. Lack of proper medication management leads to other problems – excessive sedation, cognitive decline, increased risk of falls, and even death.

You may hear that we don't have a problem in Oregon. A statewide average for use of psychotropics shows a pretty good number, but, an average can obscure a few bad situations when added in with very good results elsewhere. It's those bad situations that deserve our attention, so we can protect the well-being of the more vulnerable of our citizens who are being robbed of their quality of life and are being put at increased risk for significant health complications.

In an Oregon Health Authority review of hospitalizations due to unintentional and undetermined drug overdose, 2000-2012, the age group with the highest rate occurred among Oregonians ages 85 years of age and older.

House Bill 3262A requires Department of Human Services (DHS) to adopt rules related to prescription of psychotropic medicine to an elderly person or person with disability living in an adult foster home, residential care or long term care facility. These rules must include a review by a licensed primary care provider. This review is done to limit any adverse side effects and ensure the psychotropic medication is prescribed in the lowest effective dose. With increased oversight, we reduce the risk of serious effects, including the risk of serious and costly injury. We also create an opportunity for long-term care providers to identify potential non-pharmaceutical, individualized interventions to address behavioral issues, alleviating the need for psychotropic medications.

With this bill we are taking an important step in improving the safety of seniors and people with disabilities living in adult foster homes, residential care facilities, and long-term care facilities.

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<sup>i</sup> (8-0-1 excused)