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Prescription readers will help visually impaired people

HB 2935: Requires prescription readers be available to blind, visually impaired

SALEM – A bill that passed in the Oregon Senate will make it safer for blind and visually impaired consumers to manage their medications.

[House Bill 2935](#) – which passed on the Senate floor today – requires pharmacies to provide access to prescription readers for blind and visually impaired customers.

“A person should be able to understand what prescription drugs they’re taking, how much and other information about those medications,” said Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham), who carried the bill on the Senate floor. “This will provide those who are blind or visually impaired a greater ability to be independent by being able to safely take their medications, understanding side effects and other factors.”

The bill requires that pharmacies notify people that prescription readers are available to them upon request. Pharmacies are required to provide prescription readers to those who are blind. The pharmacies are responsible for providing a prescription reader that is compatible with the label.

For consumers to safely and effectively manage their medications, they must understand the types of medications prescribed, recommended doses, durations and potential side effects. Prescription drugs dispensed by pharmacists include labels that provide written information and instructions for consumers but reading and understanding the labels can be difficult for those who are visually impaired or blind.

Companies have developed devices to read the information provided on prescription bottles aloud, helping individuals identify and manage their medications. This requires those devices to be offered to visually impaired and blind customers purchasing their medications.

“These products are available to help visually impaired people properly take their medications, without fear of severe injury, illness or possibly death,” Monnes Anderson said. “They should be made available to those who would benefit from them. Providing this level of clarity and understanding will help a portion of our population better manage their own health and it will save lives.”

House Bill 2935 now goes to the House of Representatives, which originated the bill, for concurrence on amendments made in the Senate.

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