



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Oregon Senators Vote to Lower a Cost Barrier to Cancer Detection and Treatment

Sen. Deb Patterson's legislation ends out-of-pocket costs for cervical cancer follow-up exams

SALEM, Ore. – Early detection of cancer helps patients survive the disease, but unaffordable health care costs can keep people from getting the care they need. Large deductibles on health insurance plans force patients to weigh paying hundreds of dollars out of pocket or bear the risks of skipping care. Under a bill passed in the state Senate today, Oregonians won't have to face that choice when it comes to cervical cancer testing. Senate Bill 1527 makes these tests cost-free for patients.

“Oregon patients have been missing opportunities for early intervention, when their conditions could be treated and possibly cured,” said chief sponsor Senator Deb Patterson (D – Salem), chair of the Senate Health Care Committee. “This is a bipartisan bill that will help to prevent cancer and save people’s lives.”

Current insurance law makes initial screenings for cervical cancer cost-free for patients already, but without Senate Bill 1527, additional tests can require copayments—or full payment if the patient deals with a deductible on their insurance plan. A woman who’s had an abnormal Pap smear could face \$700 to \$1000 in costs for follow-up tests—even with insurance—to determine if cancer is present. The legislation passed today directs insurance plans to fully cover those follow-up exams.

The measure passed in a unanimous vote in the Oregon Senate, with all Republicans present joining Democrats in support.

Measures to make vaccines and doula support more affordable also are moving forward in Oregon’s 2026 short legislative session. Senate Bill 1568, requiring health insurance plans to cover at least 12 visits with doulas for childbirth patients, had a hearing in the Senate Early Childhood and Behavioral Health Committee this morning. Tomorrow, the Senate Health Care Committee will consider Senate Bill 1598, protecting access to and insurance coverage for vaccines.

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