



OFFICE OF SENATOR DEB PATTERSON

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Senate Acts to Help Hospital Patients Move to the Next Level of Care

Senate Bill 296 addresses hospital discharge delays throughout Oregon's care system

SALEM, OR – Today, the Oregon State Senate took meaningful action to address long emergency room wait times and support patients with the most complex health care needs.

In hospitals across Oregon, patients who no longer need hospital-level care are stuck waiting to be discharged to the next care setting, such as long-term care or community-based care. This creates delays and increases costs throughout the system, such as through extended hospital stays and longer emergency room wait times. This issue particularly affects patients with complex medical conditions, older adults, people with mental illness, and unhoused individuals.

After over a year of thoughtful study by experts across Oregon's health systems, the Joint Task Force on Hospital Discharge Challenges has recommended several patient-focused solutions. Senate Bill 296 implements the first phase of this multi-year, multi-session plan to reduce delays across Oregon's care settings. The bill directs the Oregon Department of Human Services to study innovative care frameworks and create a dashboard to track eligibility for long-term services and supports. The bill also extends the post-hospital care benefit for Oregon Health Plan patients from 20 days to 100 days.

"When medically fragile people have nowhere to go, they stay in the hospital. This is an issue that affects every hospital in the state," said **Senator Deb Patterson (D-Salem)**. "Senate Bill 296 takes a meaningful step toward improving Oregonians' access to appropriate care by removing barriers to discharge."

SB 296 received broad support from stakeholders throughout the health care system and passed unanimously out of the Senate (29-0-1). The measure now moves to the Oregon House of Representatives for further consideration.

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