



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Senate Bill Frees Health Care Providers from Limits Imposed by Former Employers on Where and When to Practice

Noncompetition agreements can't apply to most doctors, physician associates, and acupuncturists under legislation that cleared the Oregon Senate today

SALEM, OR – Oregon Senate Democrats voted today on a measure that will allow patients better continuity of care and access to health care providers. Under Senate Bill 957, providers licensed by the Oregon Medical Board can't be held to noncompetition agreements, making them free to practice where and when they wish.

"In Central Oregon, noncompetes have had real-life implications, with physicians traveling many miles away to continue practicing medicine and avoid these restrictions on trade," said **Senator Anthony Broadman (D – Bend)**. "At the same time, patients are struggling to get into physicians' offices or losing the provider they trust. Patients should be able to choose their physician and it is a relationship we need to protect."

Noncompetition agreements ban employees or contractors from competing with other professionals, usually a previous employer, in providing similar services for a length of time or in a certain geographic area. More than 800,000 Oregonians live in areas with health care provider shortages, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"We know that there are physician shortages, especially in primary care," said **Senator Lisa Reynolds (D – NW Portland)**, a pediatrician. "Increasing corporate buyouts, like the ones we have seen in Corvallis and Eugene, put noncompete agreements on more physicians, further limiting access to care."

The bill invalidates noncompetition agreements entered into before, on, or after the measure's passage. However, it also specifies that noncompete agreements can continue with clinicians who have at least five percent ownership of a practice and directly provide patient care.

The vote on the Oregon Senate floor was 22 to 4. The measure goes next to the Oregon House of Representatives for consideration.

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