



The Honorable Greg Smith
Oregon House of Representatives
District 57

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Rural Health Care Bill Clears House, Awaits Governor's Signature

SALEM—A bill to help primary care providers who commit to serving in rural or medically underserved areas of the state passed the Oregon House of Representatives yesterday on a unanimous, bipartisan 59-0 vote.

[Representative Greg Smith \(R-Heppner\)](#) was a chief co-sponsor of SB 440B, which gave the Oregon Health Authority the ability to transfer up to \$4 million for the purpose of creating the Primary Care Provider Loan Repayment Fund, and do so no later than June 30, 2015.

“This bill will go a long way toward helping rural residents meet their health care needs and receive improved and enhanced services,” Rep. Smith said. “It is a step in the right direction, and I am glad to see it move through the legislative process with such strong and broad support.”

SB 440B requires Oregon Health & Science University to develop and implement a program to focus recruitment efforts on students who reside in or are interested in practicing in rural or medically underserved areas. OHSU will reserve a number of admissions to each class at the medical school for qualified students who demonstrate an interest in practicing medicine in those areas.

Once those students are admitted, OHSU will support them with resources like clinical rotations in rural areas and technical assistance with accessing education loans and assistant programs.

SB 440B now heads to Gov. John Kitzhaber for his signature, at which point it will become law.

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To learn more or to provide feedback to Rep. Smith, please contact Phillip Scheuers at (503) 986-1457 or email at rep.gregsmith@state.or.us.