



## Senator Jackie Winters

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### **Senate sets corrections health care reform effort in motion**

**Salem, OR** – The Oregon Senate voted unanimously on Thursday to begin a major review and reform of Oregon prison health care costs. Senate Bill 843, if approved by the House and signed by the Governor, would establish a 13 member work group to recommend strategies for lowering health care costs in Oregon prisons.

“Senate Bill 843 is one of my highest priorities this session,” said Senator Jackie Winters (R-Salem), the Co-Chair of the Public Safety Ways and Means Subcommittee. “I believe we must identify ways to lower health care costs in prisons without compromising our standard of care. The legislature has the dual responsibility of safeguarding tax payer dollars while keeping an ethical obligation to the welfare of the incarcerated. This work group will be responsible for keeping those two things in balance.

There are more than 14,000 prisoners who receive medical care from the Oregon Department of Corrections. State and federal law require that prisoners receive health care while incarcerated that is comparable to health care available in the community.

Health care costs are responsible for 20 percent of correction’s costs, the second largest component of their per-day cost.

“It is critical that we bend the medical cost curve and look for innovative ways for cost containment,” said Winters.

Senate Bill 843 will go into effect upon receiving the Governor’s signature.

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