

February 28, 2019

Oregon State Legislature
House Committee on Health Care
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: House Bill 3063 – OAHHS Supports

Chair Salinas and members of the House Committee on Health Care:

On behalf of Oregon's 62 community hospitals and the patients they serve, the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems (OAHHS) supports efforts by the Legislature to address growing public health concerns related to childhood vaccination. As we navigate yet another measles outbreak, we are faced with the public health question of what to do about Oregon's dangerously low vaccination rates. Oregon's hospitals ask you to **join us in support of House Bill 3063** which would remove the non-medical exemption for Oregon's school immunization law.

The current measles outbreak in Washington and Oregon was preventable. Vaccines are a safe and effective way to prevent dangerous outbreaks of communicable diseases. When vaccine rates in communities are low, the first to suffer are the most vulnerable – children who cannot be vaccinated because of age or medical condition and adults with compromised immune systems. Hospitals are at the frontline of infectious disease outbreaks and witness firsthand the consequences. To put such vulnerable people at risk for preventable diseases such as polio, measles, mumps rubella or diphtheria is deeply troubling for Oregon's hospitals.

The World Health Organization named vaccine hesitancy as one of the biggest health threats in 2019. Oregon has an opportunity to increase vaccination rates and save lives by removing the non-medical exemption from the school immunization law. We ask the committee to protect communities from deadly and preventable diseases, such as measles, and support HB 3063.

Thank you,



Andi Easton
Vice President of Government Affairs
Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems