



April 4, 2019

State Rep. Andrea Salinas
State Rep. Cedric Hayden
State Rep. Rob Nosse
House Committee on Health Care
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

We are writing to express our concern about proposals to allow for the importation of prescription drugs into the tightly-regulated U.S. supply chain. There is no shortage of legislative proposals to address access to affordable prescription drugs for patients – from full supply chain transparency, to changes in insurance coverage, to sharing manufacturer discounts with consumers. None of these, however, has the potential to jeopardize patient safety and strain law enforcement the way importation does.

The US prescription drug supply chain is the safest in the world because it is a closed-loop system that tracks medicines from the manufacturer to the pharmacy counter. This is not a claim that can be made by Canada or any other country, opening up the real possibility that counterfeit drugs will make their way to US patients. This is not simply conjecture. As organizations that pay close attention to the drug supply chain, we know that counterfeit drugs – including from certified Canadian wholesalers – have made their way to Oregon. Federal and state law enforcement agencies have taken steps to notify Oregonians about the presence of counterfeit drugs and warn Oregon medical practices that are selling those drugs. Creating an importation program creates *more* opportunity for this to happen, not less.

We understand and support discussions about increasing patient access to affordable medication. But jeopardizing patient safety and straining law enforcement are significant challenges of an importation program, particularly at the state level since the federal government is ultimately responsible for guaranteeing the safety of our drug supply chain.

We urge the committee to carefully weigh the costs and benefits of importation. There are clearly better alternatives to achieving our shared objective of access to affordable medicine.

Thank you for listening to our concerns. We look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Caring Ambassadors
Kaleidoscope Fighting Lupus
Northwest Association for Biomedical Research