Senate passes expansion of Oregon prescription drug program

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Legislation will expand ability to deliver lower prices to more Oregonians

SALEM - The Oregon Senate voted Tuesday to pass Senate Bill 362, legislation that will allow more Oregonians to purchase lower-cost prescription drugs. The bill is sponsored by Senator Bill Morrisette (D-Springfield) and builds on the Oregon Prescription Drug Program that was put in place in 2003 and expanded by the voters in 2006 with Ballot Measure 44.

â€œPrescription drugs are expensive and this bill simply gives Oregonians another tool to combat rising costs,â€• said Senator Morrisette. â€œExpanding eligibility so more Oregonians save money with this program is a top priority for me.â€•

Senate Bill 362 will allow private businesses and under-insured Oregonians to participate in the drug purchasing pool, creating more purchasing power and lower costs for people using the program.

â€œThis legislation is another common sense step to making health care more affordable for Oregonians,â€• said Senator Kate Brown (D-Portland). â€œMaking the pool larger and creating more purchasing power is just smart business.â€•

The original Oregon Prescription Drug Program created pooling of prescription drug purchasing and allowed Oregonians with no health insurance to sign up for reduced prescription drug prices.

The program has been very successful, prompting Senator Morrisette to introduce Senate Bill 362 so private companies could join the pool.

Expanding access to the stateâ€™s affordable prescription drug program is on the Senate Democratic Agenda and is part of the effort to bring affordable health care to Oregon families.

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