

Via postal mail, received June 4, 2026

May 19, 2026

Dear Members of the Oregon Prescription Drug Affordability Board,

I urge you all to catalyze a nationwide change by making Oregon the first state to have free insulin.

My name is Maya Igarashi and I am [a student at a] high school here in Portland. I'm writing to you today because of the Oregon healthcare financial crisis. My mom is a type 1 diabetic. She was diagnosed at 35 and has lived the past 20 years dependent on insulin. Growing up with a diabetic mother I've witnessed the inadequacy of the American healthcare system. In order to get a one-month supply – one vial of insulin – my mom is forced to pay upwards of \$100 (before a \$5000 deductible is met), despite the fact the manufacturing costs are only about \$2-\$4. Furthermore, additional hundreds of dollars are needed for the additional medical equipment (pump, glucose monitor, emergency insulin distributor, etc.).

Over the past few decades, the prices of the medical necessity she relies on have reached truly outrageous prices. In the US (the wealthiest nation in the world), insulin is on average ten times more expensive than in other nations, who are much less financially sound. To avoid paying the sky high prices, one in every four insulin dependent Americans has admitted to rationing their insulin. This oftentimes leads to an insulin deficiency and condition called ketoacidosis, a deadly complication that turns blood acidic. A government's basic priority should be to ensure that its citizens are safe and able to survive. If individuals are suffering and developing deadly medical conditions are a result of egregious pharmaceutical prices, then the government must realize its faults and adapt to aid its people.

Diabetes diagnoses are steadily increasing across the nation, making diabetes a prominent issue for US healthcare administrators. Research shows that low-income individuals with diabetes experience more financial instability and require more medically intensive care. The increasing Medicaid cuts will be detrimental to low-income insulin dependent citizens; the expenses of insulin and other adjacent medical resources are surging, making free insulin a necessity to many. Yale Diabetes Center found that 14% (1.1 million) of people with insulin prescriptions spend 40% of their "post-subsistence income" on insulin alone. According to the American Diabetes Association, 9.5% of Oregonians are diabetic, roughly 1 in 3 of them being insulin dependent. Approximately 100,000 people under your care are insulin dependent and suffering from the very system that you, as members of the Oregon Prescription Drug Affordability Board, have the ability to change. If you were to make insulin free in Oregon, you would not only aid those who live insulin dependent but pave the way towards a more equitable and just American healthcare system. No person living with a chronic disease should ever enter financial burden in order to get the medical resources they need to survive.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration, I hope you will make this change.

Sincerely,

Maya Igarashi