

Bill on birth control stalls in Ore. Legislature

By Sheila V Kumar
Associated Press

SALEM (AP) — A proposal that would allow women to get birth control directly from a pharmacist without a doctor’s prescription stalled Friday when a committee chair decided to convene a study group instead of moving the legislation forward.

Republican Rep. Knute Buehler previously proposed allowing pharmacists to prescribe and dispense contraception to women. He said the move would eliminate a current inconsistency that allows pharmacists to dispense emergency contraception but not preventative measures.

Under the bill, pharmacists could choose not to prescribe the contraceptive for ethical, moral, or religious reasons.

“It’s clear from the scientific literature and best practices that over-the-counter birth control significantly improves women’s health and reduces unintended pregnancies by up to 25 percent,”

said Buehler, an orthopedic surgeon from Bend.

House Committee on Health Care Chair Rep. Mitch Greenlick said the issue needs further discussion, and he formed a work group that could propose potential legislation in the future.

The proposal would have “moved pharmacists out into the prescribing world in a much more robust way,” said Greenlick, a Portland Democrat.

Buehler and Rep. Val Hoyle, D-Eugene, will co-chair the work group.

If it eventually passes, Oregon would become the second state, behind California, to expand access to birth control without a prescription, he said.

In 2012, the nation’s largest group of obstetricians and gynecologists said birth control pills should be sold over the counter like condoms.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists reaffirmed that opinion in 2014, saying unintended pregnancies remains a major public health problem in the U.S.

Anvil Blasters to play The Barn

The Anvil Blasters will kick off spring with a show at The Barn on Saturday evening, April 25.

“The Barn is probably our favorite place to play,” says band member Jim Cornelius. “The sound is great in there and we love the atmosphere. It suits our music.”

The songs of The Anvil Blasters are peopled with border renegades and desert dreamers, poets, pirates and ghosts of the old, weird America. It’s a rollicking recipe of gunpowder, twang and tequila that has earned The Anvil Blasters a loyal following across Central Oregon.

The Anvil Blasters are Jim Cornelius (vocals, guitar), Mike Biggers (vocals, guitar, mandolin), Lynn Woodward (vocals, mandolin, fiddle) and guest Jeff Wester (banjo, vocals).

“Jeff’s an original Anvil Blaster,” Cornelius said. “He’s a blacksmith and he named the band back many years ago. It’s great to have him playing with us again.”

Wester named the band for an old-time holiday celebration known as “blasting the anvil” (also “blowing” or “shooting” the anvil). Celebrants would stack a pair



PHOTO BY LYNN WOODWARD

The Anvil Blasters — Mike Biggers, Lynn Woodward, and Jim Cornelius — will play at The Barn on April 25.

of anvils on top of each other, the bottom one upside down so that cavity at the bottom of each anvil met. The resulting opening was packed with black powder and lit off to blast the top anvil into the air.

The band will be joined for this show by the Central Oregon folk duo NTT (Kevin Tanski and Deb Black).

“We’ve been wanting to do a show with Kevin

and Deb for a long time,” Cornelius said. “Their harmonies are so sweet.”

The Barn is located at 68467 Three Creek Rd., about three-quarters of a mile south on Elm Street from downtown Sisters. Bring your own picnic; \$10 suggested donation. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; music starts at 7 p.m.

For more information call 541-390-6973.

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