

March 25, 2019

Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair

Senate Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Legislature

Re: SB 889

Dear Chair Monnes Anderson, Vice-Chair Linthicum and Committee Members:

OSPIRG (the Oregon State Public Interest Research Group) strongly supports the passage of SB 889, which begins the process of creating a health care cost growth benchmark for the entire state. As a consumer advocacy group that is engaged on health care issues, bending the cost curve is one of our top priorities. The proposal contemplated by SB 889 was reached through extensive discussions with diverse industry stakeholders, and was given a nearly unanimous recommendation by the Joint Task Force on Health Care Cost Review in its final report.

We know that bringing health care costs under control will not be easy, and this concept will probably not be the last word on health care cost control in Oregon. However, we also believe that understanding the forces that drive rising health expenditures is essential to curbing that trend - forces that no one completely understands today. The cost-growth benchmark program, once fully implemented, will shine a light on the factors that contribute to high prices and create better incentives for industry stakeholders to manage their costs.

The cost of health care has become an unsustainable burden for both the state budget and Oregon consumers. We urge you to make passage of SB 889 a top priority this session, beginning the process of making long term cost-control a reality, without sacrificing quality of care.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mark O. Griffith
Health Care Advocate
OSPIRG