

To whom it may concern

My name is Rebecca Cervantes-Sheeler. I am a Seamstress at the Oregon State Hospital in Junction City. I work with clients teaching them job skills, I run a clothing store that provide clothing to all the patients that enter the state hospital. I also Chair a committee that plans the hospital events to help provide normalizing events for our patients and help them continue their journey to recovery. My husband works with this same population in the same hospital.

My husband was already offered a job with the state when I was offered this position. We discussed me keeping my career as a senior store executive manager where I worked. If I had stayed at my job and just had the health insurance under my husband's state job, I would have been saving \$850 a month which was the health insurance cost. Even with that insurance we usually owed \$300 for any labs, and I paid close to \$10,000 to give birth to my child. We would have given our family a \$10,200 raise by me staying there. We decided that with increasing health care every year and increasing deductibles we would be better off financially with the net pay cut because the double coverage would make up the loss over the years. We raised our oldest with having to decide between estimated cost and visit to the doctor. We didn't want to raise the younger children that way.

We both currently work with a vulnerable population that often can only express their needs through dangerous behaviors to themselves and others around them. Although we work to keep the patients and ourselves safe it is not always possible, and danger is very real. Having double coverage is a piece of mind for us but also because my husband works a second job to pay the bills. This job takes a toll on his body and we are not getting younger.

With the loss of double coverage, I am losing more than my bargained benefits, I am losing the sacrifice I made so I could raise my children without fear of overwhelming medical bills. I am losing the freedom to choose the doctors appointment over the cost.

Our youngest son was born with a couple birth defects and underweight. He was soon tested for a rare disease because of the relationship of these defects. My only solace was that we had double coverage. He was not found to have that disease, but I'm told he has the markers and I may want to retest if he should come down with leukemia. Last year he had surgery that we hurried to have so it and the follow up visits would be covered by our double coverage at the Shriner's hospital in Portland. Last year we would have met our maximum out of pocket of \$4,500 between his surgery and couple of other medical appointments.

I have started contemplating going back to the private sector for double coverage. I left a career so I could help people in need, but when my family is in need, I feel like I am being forced to make an unfair choice. I ask why should my husband, my children and I be punished for wanting to serve a vulnerable population and want to be a part of the solution.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Cervantes-Sheeler