



To: Oregon Senate Committee on Health Care
Chair Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson
Vice-Chair Senator Dennis Linthicum
Member Senator Lee Beyer
Member Senator Shemia Fagan
Member Senator Tim Knopp

From: Tom Sincic, MSN, RN-E, President Health Care for All Oregon
Date: February 20, 2020
RE: HJR 202

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tom Sincic. I am a retired Family Nurse Practitioner and President of Health Care for All Oregon, representing HCAO's 35, 000 supporters from every corner of Oregon.

I am here today to ask you to give the people of Oregon a chance to decide whether health care is a fundamental right.

A constitution establishes a framework under which governments develop laws and systems that ensure those rights. This has been true with voting rights, disability rights, and the right to a fair trial.

Furthermore:

1. The United States Constitution was established to "promote the General Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."
2. Section 1 of the Oregon Constitution, covering the natural inherent rights in people, states that all free governments are instituted for the "peace, safety and happiness" of the people.
3. In 2012, the United Nations passed a resolution reaffirming "the right of every human being to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, ... and medical care."

It is clear that the current system of providing care does not recognize "health care access" as a right. Because a fundamental right of access to health care, as proposed in HJR 202, is not currently recognized as part of the general welfare, the blessings of liberty, or the safety or happiness of Oregonians, many people continue to suffer and die as timely access to proper care is denied or delayed. Further, many suffer significant stress and/or financial ruin eroding the general welfare, liberty, and happiness.

It is time to let Oregonians decide if amending the Oregon Constitution to say access to health care is a fundamental right to address the "peace, safety, and happiness" of Oregonians.

Health Care for ALL Oregon calls on each member of the Senate Committee on Health Care to vote to move the *Hope Amendment* on for a vote of the Legislature and subsequently be subject to a vote of the people in November of 2020.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Sincic".