



February 2, 2021

Oregon State Legislature
House Committee on Health Care
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: House Bill 2360 – Hospital Financial Assistance

Chair Prusak and members of the House Committee on Health Care:

On behalf of Oregon’s community hospitals and the patients they serve, the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems (OAHHS) supports access to health care for all people in Oregon. Oregon’s hospitals and health systems work every day to provide care for those who need it and ensure patients have access to programs that provide critical services. Previous administration proposed regulations that discouraged legal immigrants from enrolling in medical assistance, nutrition aid or housing supports that address the social determinants of health. OAHHS strongly opposed these threats to access.

Medicaid provides comprehensive and coordinated care that goes beyond hospital services and includes dental health, behavioral health, and prescription drug coverage. Expanding Medicaid and standing up coordinated care organizations has been a cornerstone in Oregon’s health system transformation efforts to ensure people have access to care. Hospital financial assistance is not intended to replace government or commercial coverage, as such, Oregon’s hospitals are key entities for getting people enrolled in Medicaid as a part of patient financial assistance services. We want to ensure that nothing in HB 2360 will preclude a hospital from educating patients about the benefits of Medicaid and assisting people in applying should they choose to do.

While enrolling people in coverage is our collective goal, hospitals recognize and understand the risk for individuals and families seeking permanent residence status. With that, OAHHS supports HB 2360’s intent to ensure patients and families are provided essential services. In addition, we ask the Oregon Health Authority to monitor for any unintended consequences of this bill - such as an increase in the number of people who are not impacted by public charge, choosing not to enroll in Medicaid and relying on hospital financial assistance as the primary source of coverage. If HB 2360 does lead to unintended consequences in the broader uninsured rate, OAHHS will work with stakeholders to bring forward policy solutions.

Thank you,

Sean Kolmer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Kolmer".

Senior Vice President of Policy and Strategy
Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems