

**Bill Hansell**  
State Senator

District 29



OREGON STATE SENATE

March 8, 2021

Senate Committee On Health Care  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Knopp, and Committee members,

I'm Senator Bill Hansell representing Senate District 29, which includes Wallowa, Union, Umatilla, Morrow, Gilliam, Sherman, and parts of Wasco Counties. Thank you for accepting my written testimony in favor of Senate Bill 557.

I offer my support for SB 557, The Compact of Free Association (COFA) Dental bill. Although, in Oregon COFA citizens under the age of 65 will be eligible to get dental care this ceases to be the case after reaching that age. This is because Medicaid eligible people when reaching 65 are transferred into Medicare. However, not all COFA citizens that reach Medicare age will be able to get Medicare because they will not have met the 40 quarterly credits required, SB 557 is necessary to ensure that COFA citizens will still be able to get dental coverage after they reach Medicare age. It is often when people reach Medicare age is when their medical and dental needs are the greatest.

The people from my district are certainly grateful to have Eastern Oregon University (EOU) serving the higher education needs of the citizens from the COFA countries. I have personally gotten to know many of these good people and have been an ardent supporter of their struggle to gain higher education and medical and dental coverage similar to US citizens. They are our neighbors and their children go to school with us.

I urge the committee to support SB 557.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Hansell". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Bill Hansell  
Oregon State Senator  
District 29