



Service Employees International Union – Oregon State Council
6401 SE Foster ▪ Portland, OR 97206

March 16, 2021

Chair Prusak and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Katie Shriver, and I represent the SEIU Oregon State Council. SEIU is an 85,000 member union in Oregon and SW Washington and a 2 million member union nationally, and I am here to speak in support of HB 2164 as amended and HB 3352.

SEIU is a very diverse union representing health care workers, property services workers, homecare and personal support workers, nursing home and nonprofit workers, janitors, public workers, and many others. About sixty percent of our members earn less than \$40,000/year, and SEIU members communicate in five different languages.

SEIU has been working on access to quality and affordable health care for our members and their families for over 50 years, and we believe now is the time for Oregon to end the coverage gap for all people in this state. Access to quality, affordable health care is a human right. And expanding access helps make sure people can seek health care when they need to rather than waiting for an emergency.

The COVID pandemic has highlighted the importance of access to health care as well as the role of racism in health. COVID has disproportionately impacted people who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in Oregon. For example, in Oregon, Latinos only make up 13% of the population but count for at least 26% of Oregon's COVID cases. Many of the frontline essential workers SEIU represents are Latinos and other BIPOC Oregonians who have continued to work through the pandemic both to serve their communities and provide for their families.

HB 2164 and HB 3352 would provide healthcare coverage to medically underserved communities including undocumented adults, DACA recipients, legal permanent residents, and young adults who age out of Cover All Kids who are currently excluded from health coverage. The bills would build on the Cover All Kids program so that we can cover all people in Oregon. SEIU supports a full, permanent expansion of Medicaid to anyone who qualifies. We also support investments in outreach and engagement to

ensure that we are reaching everyone with enrollment information. Please pass HB 2164 and HB 3352.