

In Dec 2018 I purchased my own healthcare plan through the Affordable Care Act for the first time. Trying to figure out what was and wasn't covered was nearly impossible prior to locking in a plan. Once I had a healthcare plan, I was determined to address my mental health issues. This meant seeking help through Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) partnered with a psychiatrist. In January 2019, my new insurance company gave me a list of behavioral health providers to call to set up counseling and medication management. Every provider on the list was either not accepting new patients or were no longer practicing in the state of Oregon. Finally, 9 months later, in September 2019 I was able to find a psychiatrist who also practiced CBT. When I became unemployed in 2020 and subsequently received health coverage through the Oregon Health Plan, I was no longer covered to see this provider and had to start the search for behavioral health care all over. I still receive medication management through my primary care provider, which is a lengthier and an overall less focused process on my mental health. I am writing in support of this bill because bureaucratic barriers to healthcare is an embarrassment to me, and it should be to every Oregonian until all individuals can seek care with dignity and without obfuscation. The truth is that providing health coverage to every Oregonian will benefit each citizen, and it is time to lead the rest of the country on this front.