I'm a retired nurse who spent 50+ years in Oregon with a career in public health, healthcare management and ultimately serving as the founding CEO of CareOregon, Oregon's largest OHP provider. Like the Joni Mitchell song, "I've seen 'healthcare' from ALL sides now and still somehow, I really don't know 'healthcare' at all!" Or, maybe I "don't want to know" what we call healthcare!

Healthcare is inequitable and unjust. The rich can purchase great care—poor and low income folks can't. Having to turn to "Go Fund me" is WRONG!

While working, I and my family were lucky and had good employer paid health insurance. I didn't think there would be a time when this wasn't the case. Was I ever WRONG!

During graduate school my daughter needed surgery. It was considered a "pre-existing" condition and her university insurance wouldn't pay for it. "Charity care" covered the hospital charges, but not the doctors, lab tests and MRI's. These totaled $10,000 and paying these bills took most of our family's savings.

My son and his wife were pregnant when he lost his job AND health insurance. Her work did not offer health insurance and she made just a little too much to qualify for Medicaid. They went without coverage. Luckily, Medicaid eligibility for pregnant women increased a couple of months later and she then qualified. Sadly, she delivered prematurely and my granddaughter did not survive.

If my daughter-in-law had made only a couple of dollars more per hour, and she wouldn't have qualified for Medicaid. They would have been liable for a $45,000 bill! This would have meant their family's filing for bankruptcy or losing their home--on top of losing their daughter.

Unfortunately, these tragedies happen all too often, for way to many hardworking people!

This is why I support HJR 12. Healthcare is a Human Right and our constitution needs to say so! Every other industrialized country in the world assures healthcare to their residents. Oregon needs to take this long overdue step. Please pass SJR 12 quickly so it can be referred to the people of Oregon to vote to have Healthcare as a right included in our state constitution!
Everybody in—Nobody out!