

February 16, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of legislation to provide adjunct instructors with health insurance. Currently, I am an adjunct instructor at PSU teaching mathematics and statistics in the Fari-borz Maseeh Department of Mathematics & Statistics. I have held this position since 2017. My motivation for writing this letter is that I am also disabled, and the lack of health insurance has been a major obstacle in growing my career.

My disability began to affect my life in 2003, when I was working in research labs at OHSU. The problems it caused to my employer at that time caused him to force me to resign. I spent many years trying to repair that damage to my career from that discrimination all the while trying to deal with a disability without access to quality doctors.

When I joined the PhD program in mathematics at PSU in 2014, I finally was put on a health insurance plan and was able to see a physician about my condition. While they were unable to completely diagnose my conditions, they were able to prescribe medication which helped me deal with the conditions (pain, muscle spasms, cramping, and numbness). Unfortunately, I faced another instance of disability discrimination in my PhD career and lost my status as a student at that institution, leaving me teaching one class a term as an adjunct instructor.

But that cut me off from health care and raised the price of the medication which helped calm my symptoms from \$70/month to \$500/month. I cannot save any money for health insurance and can't even get my medication on a regular basis.

At this point, I see a couple of paths to redeem myself, become a fulltime instructor or enter another graduate program at OHSU. Unfortunately, not having health insurance makes pursuing either of these paths next to impossible.

And to me, this seems unjust and wasteful. I know many people who have taken adjunct positions as either a way into a fulltime teaching career or as a way to earn money while looking for opportunities related to teaching (such as research). Many have left teaching specifically because there is no health insurance provided by PSU for adjuncts. This has resulted in the loss of many quality instructors with years of experience. All because access to quality healthcare is critical to these people regardless of disability status.

Sincerely yours,

Instructor Scott