

2/23/2020

To: Oregon Senate Committee on Health Care.

The purpose of my testimony is to express support for SB 428 in extending the timeline for the Task Force on Universal Health Care to complete our obligation. The aim is to design a Universal Healthcare Plan for all Oregonians as it relates to SB 770. I serve as a member of the Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care, a leader of the Eligibility, Enrollment, and Affordability Task Force Advisory Group (TAG). Also, I serve as the Chair of its Consumer Advisory Committee.

Our responsibility is to discern a comprehensive, affordable, accessible, quality, Single-payer Health Care system to provide healthcare services that would benefit all Oregonians. However, since the enactment of SB 770, we have been forced to negotiate the initial timeline allocated because of an unexpected Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic crisis. The COVID-19 created circumstances that landed us in an untenable position to achieve our goals and objectives at an uninterrupted pace. This painful disease forced us to race against the calendar, thereby performing in a rushed manner to meet our initial deadline and reprioritize our efforts around this outbreak. As a result, meeting our initial deadline became even more difficult and discerning. We realize the importance and need for an extension to be useful in our due diligence.

The extension of time would permit ample opportunity to identify, discuss, and collaborate with healthcare experts, providers, businesses, communities, and other potential stakeholders. This collaborative effort would also help us recognize and analyze the needs and resources in developing a comprehensive healthcare design to address the elements illustrated in SB 770. With more time, we can collect critical and valuable information to explore, examine, and evaluate essential components such as eligibility, benefits, affordability, financing, revenues, provider reimbursements, and other measurable standards. Additional time would help us gain an in-depth understanding of the issues, impacts, and evidence-based practices and methods to consider in making meaningful recommendations to the Legislative Assembly. The extended timeline would enable us to develop appropriate administrative objective strategies conducive to designing a healthcare model that is sustainable, serviceable, and strong.

Therefore, meeting SB 770's expectations, guidelines, and responsibilities in achieving our goals requires additional time. Based upon these considerations and concerns, I urge you to please approve and adopt the SB 428 proposal to extend the deadline for one year toward designing a sustainable Universal Health Care model fitting for all Oregonians. In so doing, we may complete our obligation in recommending comprehensive, objective strategies to the Legislative Assembly as successful members of the Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care.

Respectfully,

Glendora Claybrooks