

To: Chair Prusak and Members of the House Health Care Committee

Date: 2/1/22

For the record, I am writing on behalf of Health Care for All Oregon (HCAO). We strongly urge your support for **HB 4095**.

HB 4095 establishes Veterans Dental Program in Oregon Health Authority to provide oral health care to low-income veterans who reside in Oregon beginning in 2023. Oral healthcare is essential to overall good health. Those who do not have access to oral healthcare are at a higher risk of developing serious oral conditions and diseases. Oral health has also been linked to various diseases such as endocarditis, cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer's, pneumonia, and birth complications. Many Oregonians, especially low-income Oregonians struggle to afford oral healthcare services.

This bill will allow low-income veteran in Oregon to get the oral healthcare they need without having to worry about the cost of the visit. This bill will give them the opportunity to receive the care they need before their oral health problems become worse or lead to other health problems and require costlier treatment. Veterans have served this state and country, passing this bill is one way we can repay them for their service.

Importantly, HB 4095 is a step forward that is alignment with the legislatively approved *Purposes, Values and Principles* guiding the important work of the Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care. The design of the system that will come before the legislature in 2023 calls for the following:

- Improving the health status of individuals, families and communities
- Protecting individuals from the financial consequences of ill health
- Cost shall not be a barrier
- Include dental, vision, and hearing.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service. We urge you to support HB 4095.

Sincerely,

Zainab Alidina
Health Care for All Oregon Board Member