

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 4052**.

HB 4052 requires Oregon Health Authority to provide grants to operate two culturally and linguistically specific mobile health units, as pilot program, to serve priority populations with histories of poor health or social outcomes. It also requires OHA to study feasibility of expanding mobile health units statewide and to develop recommendations on how to fund robust culturally and linguistically specific intervention programs designed to prevent or intervene in health conditions that result in inequitable and negative outcomes for individuals who are Black or indigenous, people of color and members of tribes.

Oregon declared racism as a public health crisis in the 2021 session. It is now time to dedicate resources to address this crisis. This bill represents an important step towards doing so.

Incidents of racism consistently experienced by Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities and Tribes create racial disparities in social, health, economic, legal, and academic outcomes. Racism is the reason why COVID-19 has hit communities of color harder. It is also why African Americans and American Indians and Alaska Natives experienced more years of potential life lost (YPLL) than any other race and ethnicity in Oregon (Oregon Death Certificate Data, 2016).

Health inequities are preventable issues that when addressed provide significant cost savings not only to health systems, but also other systems related to the social determinants of health. More importantly, addressing these issues of racism improves the health and quality of life for all Oregonians.

Racism didn't happen overnight or with one action. Dismantling systematic racism will take years, multiple legislative concepts, policies, and community pushes. This issue is about people's lives and their health and the fact that people are dying far earlier than they should. We must do a much better job of preventing that. To address this by bringing services directly to where those impacted is a proven strategy and another opportunity for Oregon to do a better job of addressing the many problems that create inequities in our health system.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service. We urge you to support HB 4052.

Sincerely,

Zainab Alidina
Health Care for All Oregon Board Member