

Submitter: Christine Bugas
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Health Care
Measure: HB4035

Thank you to this committee, the Legislature, and all the policymakers who are working to make quality, comprehensive and affordable health care a reality for tens of thousands of uninsured and underinsured Oregonians.

Many of these Oregonians are my patients and I see firsthand what they face. Because of the uncontrolled rise in costs for everything that's related to health care, many people, including some of my patients, delay and ration care.

This translates to sicker people, people who are less able to work, people who struggle to care for their families, people who seldom live full and rewarding lives.

They want to be healthy, they just can't afford good health, and that's fundamentally wrong.

We now have an opportunity to fix this.

In addition to offering more affordable and comprehensive health care choices, state-based marketplaces have the flexibility to lengthen and extend enrollment periods, well beyond the narrower six-week window of healthcare.gov.

A state-based marketplace opens the door for next-generation technology that can improve the consumer experience and make getting health care easier and more convenient for Oregonians.

A state-based marketplace empowers Oregon to fix shortcomings, such as more robust community outreach so people know and understand their options, and smoother coordination for individuals transitioning from CHIP and Medicaid.

I know how difficult navigating the health care system can be even as a physician who is part of it, and streamlining these complications could do wonders for patients.

Following the previous Administration's efforts to undermine the Affordable Care Act, including cuts to navigator funding and outreach, Oregon has opportunities to correct these injuries quickly and efficiently, and build a state-based marketplace that is more accessible, user-friendly and informative to Oregonians.

And, critically, a state-based marketplace could generate significant cost savings, which would help make a public option more affordable should Oregon pursue a state

cost-sharing subsidy.

We can improve health and inspire hope for all Oregonians.

Thank you for allowing me to weigh in on the importance of implementing a state-based marketplace with the goal of a patient-centered public option.

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