



From the Desk of State Senator Deb Patterson

Support HB 3320 A: Strengthening Hospital Financial Assistance

Healthcare is becoming increasingly unaffordable for low-income patients in Oregon. Life-threatening medical emergencies can happen without warning and result in unexpected costs. As one way of alleviating this burden, and living up to their charitable missions, nonprofit hospitals are required by federal and state law to provide assistance by reducing or eliminating hospital bills for patients who qualify.

Ensure eligible patients get access to financial assistance.

House Bill 3320-A will increase access to financial assistance and reduce the number of Oregonians sent to debt collection as a result of receiving medical services.

- Make information about financial assistance more prominent by featuring the information in multiple locations, including on hospital website homepages.
- Require hospitals to accept applications online in addition to other methods.
- Screen patients with bills of \$500 or more for presumptive eligibility for financial assistance. For patients determined eligible through this screening process, the financial assistance amount will be applied before the patient receives a bill.
- If a patient applies for and is found to be eligible for financial assistance after the patient has already paid, they will receive a refund for those payments.
- Require hospitals to have a process for a patient to appeal a hospital's denial of financial assistance.

Improve transparency about hospital financial assistance practices.

House Bill 3320 A will increase transparency about how much assistance hospitals are providing by requiring annual reporting about, for example:

- Total financial assistance applications the hospital/clinic received
- Total patients that qualified for free or discounted care
- Total accounts sent to collections
- Total accounts taken to court over their debt

Please vote Yes on HB 3320 A.