

Submitter: Robert A. Lowe, MD, MPH
Committee: Senate Committee on Health Care
Measure: SB704

As a retired emergency physician and health policy researcher, I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 704.

Every hour of every day in the emergency department, we see patients who suffer for lack of access to care elsewhere. When patients lack access to primary care, their hypertension, diabetes, asthma and other chronic problems that could be managed in a primary care setting go untreated, leading to heart attacks, strokes, kidney failure, and numerous other medical emergencies. Fortunately, we have emergency departments open to all regardless of insurance status, where we can treat these medical crises, but the physical consequences to the patients are tragic and the unnecessary costs for preventable illnesses impact all of us.

SB704 is a step in the right direction – to establish a single payer medical care system for all. We know that improving access to care can save lives, and a system without the administrative complexities and middlemen that we currently have can save money.

I hope that the Senate Committee on Health Care will support and pass this important legislation. Thank you.