

Submitter: Andrew Seles
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB704

Dear Committee Members:

On November 8, 2022 “Right to Health Care Measure 111,” supported by over fifty organizations as diverse as Providence Health Services, Planned Parenthood, Oregon AFT, Main Street Alliance, SEIU and Oregon AFL-CIO, passed with roughly one million YES votes. The measure proposes an amendment to the Oregon constitution establishing the state’s obligation to ensure every Oregon resident has access to cost-effective, clinically appropriate, and affordable healthcare.

We are the first state to explicitly state the necessary components for health care, declaring them as a human right for all of our residents.

For too long our system has fostered medical bankruptcy and delays in care; patients often go to emergency rooms with conditions that could be treated proactively. For too long decisions about our personal health have been made by corporations focused on profits over people. For too long, Oregon voters have not had a voice in shaping healthcare...until now.

Personally, because we are retired, my wife and I have been fortunate to be covered by Medicare. Today we sat side by side at the new Heimann Cancer Center, each of us getting expensive, life-saving infusions that would have been either denied us or bankrupted us a mere decade ago. My heart breaks for those, especially the young, who cannot afford similar care and who risk more dangerous and costly health outcomes by not addressing their current health concerns.

I am asking the Oregon State Senate to support SB 704 which establishes a Universal Health Plan Governance Board and directs board to create comprehensive plan for implementing Universal Health Plan beginning in 2027.

Thank you for your consideration,
Andrew Seles
Ashland, Oregon