

Submitter: Kay Eilers
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB704

February 10, 2023

Dear Honorable Senators and Representatives:

I want to strongly encourage you to support SB 704, universal health care.

I retired from Crescent Valley High School, Corvallis, in 2012 after working for the school district as a classified employee for 28 years. I also was the proud parent of two graduates from CVHS (1994 and 1996).

I say was, because our daughter Anna died from brain cancer in 2001. She was diagnosed in 1998, and her battle lasted 2-1/2 years. It included several surgeries, radiation, chemotherapy, and a myriad of drugs. Her death was an unfortunate end to great potential (she was a CVHS Valedictorian and an A student at Willamette University). Fortunately, however, the school district's medical insurance policy was generous at that time.

As I continued my employment at CVHS, however, those benefits were reduced. Part-time staff were no longer eligible without a prohibitive contribution, then later coverage was reduced from 100 to 80 percent for full-time employees. I do not know what the benefits are now, but I do know that Anna's medical expenses would have been financially catastrophic if her condition had occurred later in my employment. I enjoyed my job, but was chained to it if I didn't.

No one deserves to deal with a devastating financial burden in addition to an emotional one. No one should have to choose between medical treatment and food or shelter. Please support SB 704 to prevent bankruptcies and the financial trauma that tears families apart. With Covid, Monkeypox, and who knows what on the horizon, there's never been a better time to do it.

Sincerely,

Kay Eilers