

Submitter: Zainab Alidina
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB704

I am a doctoral student in public health at Oregon State University. I am writing to request your support for SB 704. Access to health care and cost of healthcare has been an issue in Oregon and the rest of the US for a long time. Low income and marginalized communities have barriers to access healthcare and face many health inequities. We know from the Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care's Final Report and Recommendations that Oregonians have delayed medical care due to costs. We also know from that report that minorities in Oregon are up to three times more likely to using up their savings on medical bills compared to their white counterparts.

The cost of healthcare has risen dramatically over the last decade. In Oregon, healthcare costs per person grew faster than income, average wages, and inflation. Expenditure on healthcare per person grew faster in Oregon compared to the US average. Oregonians are spending 23% of their personal spending on healthcare. This is higher than their spending on housing, utilities, and fuel! Between 2013 and 2019, Oregonians saw a 40-51% increase in their deductibles. Sixty percent of bankruptcies have some form of medical debt in Oregon. This is not sustainable.

Oregonians should be able to access healthcare without worrying about cost and risking bankruptcy. The creation of the governance board is the next step for the future implementation of universal healthcare in Oregon. We all know our system is broken. We all know single payer is the solution. The passage of Measure 111 shows that Oregonians want a better system. Now is the time to make it a reality for Oregonians.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service. I urge you to support SB 704.

Sincerely,

Zainab Alidina