

Submitter: Nicholas Marrapode
On Behalf Of: Democratic Socialists of America Portland Chapter
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB704

I am a UPS delivery driver and proud rank and file member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 162. My union negotiated contract provides me with good wages and excellent benefits including outstanding healthcare for myself and my spouse at virtually no cost to me. Despite this, I strongly support creating a single payer healthcare system and universal healthcare for all residents of this state, and eventually all people in this country.

Every single human being will become ill and need medical attention, this is a fact of life. Relying on private, for-profit insurance to cover costs in an obscenely expensive privately run healthcare system is a denial of that basic fact. High quality healthcare should be a foundational right for everyone, especially considering we live in the wealthiest and most productive society in all of human history. Families should not have to choose between medical care and food, medicine and rent, doctor visits or utility bills. Workers like myself who have the benefit of collective bargaining agreements should not be threatened with loss of healthcare by our employers when we choose to exercise our constitutionally protected right to strike for better pay and working conditions. Families should not have to lose lifetimes of savings or even enter into bankruptcy for doing what any human being would do and putting their health and the health of their children above all other concerns. A system which allows for the immiseration of human beings through medical costs has no place in a just society.

Many people are also forced into higher cost, worse outcome emergency room visits because preventative care was denied to them, regular doctor visits were out of reach, and medicine was completely unaffordable. A single payer system guaranteeing care would bring down costs and provide better outcomes as people are able to address their health issues earlier and at the root rather than seeking emergency treatment once conditions become acute or pain becomes no longer endurable.

For these reasons I support this bill. Thank you.