

I am writing in support of SB 704. It is imperative that we take this next important step toward the goal of providing universal health care for all people in Oregon. The people of Oregon are quite clear that they demand health care that is free, high-quality, patient-centered, and free from a profit or even a "nonprofit" motive. The time is now.

AFT-Oregon has voted to endorse this legislation. Access to healthcare should be a human right. Workers should not be tied to abusive jobs solely because they need healthcare. Getting healthcare should not have to be a bargained right for union members. Government sponsored healthcare frees up money to be used to improve safe working conditions, to manage patient to nurse ratios, and to provide more support for classroom teachers.

Customers should not be risking their health if restaurant and market employees must come to work sick because they lack healthcare.

We urge you to legislate the creation of this governing board.

Ira Erbs
VP of Political and Legislative Affairs
On behalf of American Federation of Teachers, Oregon