

Submitter: Alex Polikoff

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure: SB704

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Committee members;

I wish to add my voice to those in favor of SB 704. I have been one of the lucky Oregonians to have had good health insurance through my employers for many years. However, I have had serious negative health impacts in spite of having my “good” insurance plans. I have had two surgeries in the past 5 years, and both times I have had to fight tooth and nail with my health insurers in order to get an MRI that was necessary to properly diagnose my condition. This included having my primary care physician intervene on my behalf with insurer medical staff. The last surgery was for spinal stenosis that was causing me crippling pain; the delay in authorization resulted in muscle atrophy and permanent loss of strength in my left arm. With a single-payer system that SB 704 lays the groundwork for, all my medically necessary procedures would have been done without delaying care in an attempt to minimize insurance company expenditures.

I am fairly knowledgeable in medical matters, have no problem asserting myself with people in authority, and like to think I have pretty good communication skills. I am horrified at the thought of other Oregonians who do not enjoy such advantages going through what I went through, and whose health is at the complete mercy of insurance companies.

I have been following health care legislation for almost two decades. I think it common knowledge that our health care system is on a trajectory to unaffordable cost, inequitable delivery of care, and the profit motive taking priority over people’s health. I urge you to support SB 704 as our best chance to ensure that all Oregonians receive accessible, affordable health care with their choice of doctors, all while spending less than we currently spend in the state.

Thank you.

Regards,

Alex Polikoff
Corvallis, OR