

Submitter: Demetrios Deligiorgis
On Behalf Of:
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Thank you for hearing testimony on this matter.

I write as someone who worked in 2009 in conjunction with the Obama Administration's West Wing Communications Office (OFA via Jeff Gabriel) to try and pass universal healthcare in an effort that compromised into what has become the American Care Act, or Obamacare.

My appeal today is that the legislature endeavor to create true, uncompromised universal healthcare for Oregonians. I have watched since the January, 2010, when I was heartbroken then because of the compromise, as insurance lobbies, alt-right, fiscal conservatives on mostly the Republican side have taken their turns chopping away at the compromise, despite promises that were made to not do so then by such stakeholders.

We are fortunate President Biden's administration has been charged with prioritizing healthcare reform initiative, particularly since he led the helm back in 2009.

As someone who has been a recent victim of violent crime, a savage stabbing in March, 2022, that nearly killed me, I can testify before this body today and say I'm pretty sure if be dead now if OHA hadn't been there to foot the bill until my assailant was caught and forced to pay restitution. Why? Because I wouldn't have gone to the hospital if I'd thought I was going to have a six figure medical bill at the end.

That fateful day, I consciously made a choice as I literally was bleeding out from more than eight hunting knife wounds that I would rather die than be forced to pay exorbitant medical bills that would follow me until my dying days. That day I called to check on my insurance status without telling the operator I was severely wounded, and I was so relieved to learn I'd been automatically added to OHA earlier in the year after being laid off.

But it was too late, I'd already stalled too long, and I lost my strength as I was loading the car for the hospital. If a friend had not called police for a welfare check, I surely would have died right where I was passing out, beside my truck, when police pulled up and were able to render aid and call for ambulance and fire units.

I'm trying, so very hard, to make good on my second chance at life, even through severe PTSD that keeps me indoors, at home, nearly all day every day. I can't help but think of how many others have been faced with that same decision I was faced.

I urge the Senate Committee on Rules to adopt whichever bills via whichever measures to ensure Oregon continue its slow march to effective Universal Healthcare Coverage.