

Oregon Senate Rules Committee
900 Court Street
Salem Oregon, 97301

Re: Letter of Support for SB 1089
Establishing Universal Health Plan Governance Board

April 13, 2023

Chair Senator Lieber and Committee Members,

My name is Tony Germann and I am a family physician working for the rural underserved in the Willamette Valley. I live in West Linn, Oregon. For 21 years I have served in the healthcare field as a hospital clerk, EMT, primary care provider and clinical medical director.

I write to you with steadfast support of SB 1089. I encourage you to support this necessary legislation to move Oregon forward to our collective goal of universal healthcare access.

SB1089 is not universal healthcare however it is the critical next step. This bill will create the governance board entrusted with the responsibility to design the elements of universal healthcare in our state. Work leading up to this moment, the 2017 [RAND study](#) and the 2022 report of the [Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care](#), confirms that universal healthcare will provide better care to more Oregonians for less money. The governance board requires expertise, experience, judgment, and dedication from every member of the board; the executive director, staff, and consultants. We also need to consider appropriately funding for this group of experts. If we underfund this project we can predict failure.

Recently I served on the Bridge task force with the passage HB4035. Our state will begin Medicaid redetermination. We developed a supportive plan for many Oregonians but let us be clear this is not the ultimate solution to the problem. Many will lose insurance and the issues that faced us in healthcare prior to the pandemic remain. My patients are dying prematurely. My staff are leaving healthcare. My colleagues are fed up with this system. We continue to lose the infrastructure of providers and staff that need to be present to care

for our communities due to their frustrations with our healthcare system. Reaching for universal healthcare access is of the gravest necessity at this moment and SB 1089 is central to our response.

Appropriate funding of SB 1089 may require a one time investment of \$6 million dollars by taxpayers. But this funding determines how Oregon will spend over \$50 billion annually for generations. The initial investment in SB 1089 will produce outsized returns in the medical and financial health of all Oregon families, businesses, and communities.

Although the 'fiscal' for 1089 is not yet finalized, former members of the Joint Task Force on Universal HealthCare estimates that approximately \$6 million is needed. This level of funding will assure that essential staff, consultants and expertise will provide you with the information and answers you need going forward.

Please put sufficient funding for SB 1089 on your Committee's final list of "must be funded."

Sincerely,

Antonio Germann, MD MPH
Clinical Medical Director - Salud and Pacific Pediatrics Medical Clinics
Fellowship Director- Salud Rural Maternal Child Health Fellowship