

Let's pass SB 1089 establishing the governance board for implementing the design laid out by the Task Force to implement comprehensive universal healthcare. When I say comprehensive, I include vision coverage for the eyes, hearing for the ears and maintenance of the teeth as integral to the health of Oregonians. Blurry vision, poor hearing, rotten teeth and poor mental health are expensive healthcare problems that are often excluded from coverage even for workers and retired seniors who have insurance. Comprehensive also encompasses hearing aids and mental health care.

During the week, I was laid off, I was diagnosed with cataracts in both eyes. This was a small, ordinary crisis compared with that of other witnesses today but shocked me nonetheless. How lucky I was to get both eyes fixed while the employment based insurance was in effect since the next month I had no insurance and the minimum cost of the eye surgeries was about \$12,000 in today's dollars.

As with many Oregonians, the last time I had dental insurance that covered more than 25% of dental expense was when I had a full-time job. More than once since then, dental bills have exceeded ten percent of my income. How many of us have had teeth pulled and been unable to pay for a root canal and crown? This, too, is a healthcare concern that deserves our attention.

Poor hearing is a healthcare concern as is poor mental health. A pair of high quality hearing aids runs thousands of dollars. When a person loses his hearing, he is left out of conversation and will often feel isolated. Depression, bipolar and other mental disorders can lead to cascading healthcare challenges when left untreated. .

Let's take seriously all healthcare problems through prevention and treatment. Everybody in, nobody out. Support SB 1089.