

Submitter: Jules Allison

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human Services

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5025

My name is Jules Allison, I am a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor II (CADC II), and Clinical Supervisor. Since 2015, I have worked in various mental health settings, including community agencies, clinics, and private practice, focusing on marginalized communities, particularly LGBTQ+ individuals dealing with PTSD and complex trauma.

I am writing to strongly urge full funding for the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) Bridge Program under HB 5025. The recent federal funding freeze initiated by President Trump on January 28, 2025, has already caused significant disruptions in Medicaid services nationwide, including here in Oregon. Although a federal judge has temporarily blocked this freeze, the incident underscores the vulnerability of essential health services to federal policy changes.

Furthermore, with President Trump's re-election and sweeping executive orders, proposals outlined in Project 2025 are poised to restructure and significantly cut Medicaid funding. These anticipated federal reductions make it imperative for Oregon to proactively safeguard the OHP Bridge Program to ensure continuous healthcare access for our most vulnerable residents.

Fiscal Implications of Inaction:

- **Increased State Expenditures:** Without the OHP Bridge Program, individuals losing Medicaid coverage are more likely to delay care until emergencies arise, leading to higher costs in emergency services and hospitalizations—expenses that the state will inevitably bear.
- **Economic Instability:** Interruptions in healthcare coverage can result in deteriorating health among the workforce, leading to decreased productivity and increased reliance on state-funded assistance programs.

The Path Forward:

To mitigate these risks, I urge the committee to:

1. **Fully Fund the OHP Bridge Program:** Ensure that continuous healthcare coverage is available, preventing costly emergency interventions and promoting preventive care.
2. **Prepare for Federal Funding Reductions:** Develop contingency plans to address potential shortfalls resulting from anticipated federal Medicaid cuts under the current administration.
3. **Advocate for State Autonomy in Healthcare Decisions:** Strengthen Oregon's ability

to maintain essential health services independently of federal policy fluctuations. By taking these steps, Oregon can uphold its commitment to the health and well-being of its residents, demonstrating fiscal responsibility and moral leadership during these uncertain times.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,  
Jules Allison, LPC, CADC II