



January 30, 2024

Oregon State Legislature
Senate Committee on Labor and Business
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301
Submitted electronically via OLIS

RE: SB 605, Relating to medical debt reporting

Chair Taylor and Members of the Committee:

The Hospital Association of Oregon (HAO) is a mission-driven nonprofit association representing Oregon's 61 community hospitals.

SB 605 would prohibit a "medical services provider," which includes hospitals and nonprofit hospital-affiliated clinics, from taking certain actions related to medical debt, and the bill includes substantial enforcement provisions. We are in communication with our hospitals to learn more about their practices and assess the impact of this bill. We are still learning about this policy proposal.

One aspect we are looking into is the relationship between this proposal and recent federal rule changes issued by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). In January 2025, the CFPB issued regulations banning the inclusion of medical bills on credit reports. Credit reporting companies are prohibited from including medical bills on credit reports sent to lenders.

We are also assessing this law in the context of other Oregon laws and programs, such as the Oregon Health Plan and Oregon's financial assistance law.

Finally, we are considering this bill in the context of the current state of hospitals in Oregon. The health care system is at a breaking point, strained by mounting costs and a morass of regulations. This bill would layer on more administrative work and create additional risk that lawsuits, even by compliant hospitals, would need to be defended.



HAO is opposed to SB 605 as introduced.

We will continue following this legislation and look forward to hearing more from advocates about what they are trying to achieve.

Sincerely,



Troy Duker
Director of Government Affairs
Hospital Association of Oregon

About the Hospital Association of Oregon

Founded in 1934, the Hospital Association of Oregon (HAO) is a mission-driven, nonprofit trade association representing Oregon's 61 hospitals. Together, hospitals are the sixth largest private employer statewide, employing more than 70,000 employees. Committed to fostering a stronger, safer, more equitable Oregon where all people have access to the high-quality care they need, the hospital association supports Oregon's hospitals so they can support their communities; educates government officials and the public on the state's health landscape, and works collaboratively with policymakers, community based organizations and the health care community to build consensus on and advance health care policy benefiting the state's four million residents.

