



**To: Chair Nancy Nathanson  
Vice Chair Reschke  
Vice Chair Walters  
Representative Hudson  
Representative Levy  
Representative Marsh  
Representative Smith**

**Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:**

My name is Matt Swanson, and I am here on behalf of the 85,000 SEIU members who provide essential services to seniors, people with disabilities, children, and all Oregonians. Our members work in state agencies, nursing homes, hospitals, and home and community-based services to ensure the healthcare needs of Oregonians are met. Today, I urge you to continue funding for the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) and pass House Bill 2010A.

**The Critical Role of Medicaid in Oregon**

Medicaid is a lifeline for Oregonians, providing healthcare access to 1.4 million people—one-third of the state’s population.<sup>1</sup>

- **57% of Oregon’s children** are covered by Medicaid (ages 0-17)
- **44% of births in Oregon are covered by Medicaid**
- **37% of Medicaid enrollees are people of color** (non-elderly), making OHP a critical tool in addressing health disparities
- **58% of adults on OHP are working**

Because of Medicaid expansion, Oregon has dramatically reduced the number of uninsured individuals. In 2011, 14.6% of Oregonians—over 546,000 people—were without coverage. By 2024, that number has dropped to just 2.7% or 105,500 individuals.<sup>2</sup> Maintaining this progress

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<sup>1</sup> Found on-line: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HPA/ANALYTICS/Pages/medicaid-enrollment.aspx> and <https://files.kff.org/attachment/fact-sheet-medicaid-state-OR>

<sup>2</sup> Found on-line: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HPA/ANALYTICS/pages/ohis-coverage.aspx>



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requires a continued commitment to funding our state share of Medicaid programs through hospital and insurer assessments as well as the OHSU intergovernmental transfer.

### **Why HB 2010 Matters**

HB 2010 is essential for preserving the state’s financial contribution to a joint state and federal partnership to ensure health coverage for Oregonians. This ensures that Oregon continues to provide the resources necessary to protect healthcare access from birth to end of life. The bill also continues the Oregon Reinsurance Program (ORP), which helps lower insurance costs and stabilizes the healthcare marketplace.

Preserving these assessments provides certainty for healthcare providers, payers, consumers and communities around the state. That is why more than 70 organizations have already joined in urging a yes vote. This is a vote to continue funding for programs that we can all be proud of.

### **Medicaid Provides Stability for SEIU Members and the People We Serve**

Many SEIU members rely on the Oregon Health Plan for their own healthcare coverage. This includes workers who care for our most vulnerable. Many of our members work in long-term care, hospitals, and home and community-based services but still earn wages low enough to qualify for Medicaid. Without OHP, many working families would be left without affordable healthcare options.

SEIU members have experienced how the Oregon Health Plan can provide essential access to care when it is most needed.

“I am writing today in strong support for fully funding for the Oregon Health Plan. I am a homecare worker and had been working with my client since 2015, when my client suddenly passed away in 2023. Prior to her passing I was on marketplace insurance through Carewell. After two months of not working, I lost my insurance, and the Oregon Health Plan was my only option. I was in a car accident in 2022, where I suffered a concussion among other injuries that caused me to have a vestibular imbalance and become disabled. I have been in physical therapy ever since then. Without OHP, I would not be able to continue with physical therapy and my prescription medications. I would be unable to work as a care provider and probably would become a client myself. Which would have put a bigger financial burden on the system. Oregon Health Plan is an



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essential safety net for uninsured and under insured Oregonians. Many who are just like me, hard workers providing services and care to our most vulnerable populations. Please fully fund the Oregon Health Plan.”

Cristal, Bend, Oregon

Oregon Health Plan coverage is helping Amelia get healthy and back to work

“Amelia is a janitor with 19 years of service. She worked at a building where the hours were cut. She worked part-time for a few months and had just been given additional hours to get back to full time and get her union medical insurance back when she experienced an off-the-job injury. A set of stairs she was standing on collapsed, and her spine was fractured. This was in early July, and now in February she is still going to physical therapy three times per week. Since she had lost her medical insurance due to the hours cut and hadn’t worked enough full-time hours to get it back, luckily for her the Oregon Health Plan was an option.

During the medical procedures related to her spinal fracture, it was discovered that she had a faulty heart valve and needs surgery. Thanks to the Oregon Health Plan, she has surgery scheduled for March and will be able to return to full-time work after that.”

### **The Cost of Inaction**

If we do not renew Oregon’s share of Medicaid funding, the state risks cuts to the state’s budget and loss of federal funds. The consequences would be devastating—not only to individuals but to the stability of our entire healthcare system. Medical conditions and emergencies happen regardless of insurance status. Cuts to Medicaid would force families to forgo necessary care or, more likely, rely on costly emergency room visits. This would lead to hospitals and providers incurring higher amounts of uncompensated care costs. There is also a personal and societal cost as people remain sick, go into debt, and have their ability to work impacted.

Fully funding the Oregon Health Plan is not just an investment in healthcare—it is an investment in Oregon’s economic and social stability.

### **Conclusion**

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We can't go backwards. I urge you to support HB 2010 and fully fund Medicaid. This legislation is critical for the health and well-being of our state's most vulnerable populations and for the many SEIU members who provide essential care.

Thank you for your time and consideration.