

To: Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Re: SB 5511 Related to the Department of Consumer and Business Services Budget
Date: February 18, 2025

Co-Chair Woods and Co-Chair Gomberg and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tom Sincic. I am a retired Family Nurse Practitioner.

In this DCBS budget request is an essential Section 3 related to continued funding of the Universal Health Plan Governance Board.

The funding recommendation is necessary for many reasons. Here is a start. In 2022, Oregonians spoke clearly by adding access to healthcare as a fundamental right in the Oregon Constitution, Article I Section 47. The Universal Health Plan Governance Board as codified in [ORS 751](#) is the pathway to meeting that constitutional right.

We all know the current health system is broken—costly, unaffordable, and inequitable. In terms of economic development, it is increasingly a costly and administrative burden for businesses, families and communities. The cost and complexity of healthcare is especially felt by small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs.

Therefore, it is essential that this legislature provide the necessary funding for the Board's work.

The current proposed funding is at its core an adoption of the original budget allotment in the 2023-25 biennium. It was developed before the Universal Health Plan Governance Board had a chance to consider and make its recommendation based on its work plan.

When the initial budget was created the work plan was yet to be created. Careful planning has now created 4 and soon to be 5 committees of 44 volunteers of individuals with deep expertise and perspectives to help develop the recommendation which will be presented to the legislature in September of 2026.

- [Community Engagement and Communications Committee](#)
- [Finance and Revenue Committee](#)
- [Plan Design and Expenditures Committee](#)
- [Operations Committee](#)

Each of these Committees and the Board itself requires a staff and technical support and the consultants and processes necessary to complete their work. I have put links to the charge and membership of each in written testimony.

ORS 751 11 states:

(b) Subject to any applicable provisions of ORS chapter 240, the executive director shall appoint staff as needed for policy analysis and administrative support.

(c) The executive director shall contract with experts and consultants as necessary to carry out ORS 751.002 (3). [2023 c.613 §1]

I know that the Governance Board is undertaking a current analysis of the actual need to support this critical work. It is my understanding that this information will be forth coming.

In the meantime, this current budget recommendation should be considered a place holder while the necessary funding evaluation is being taken up by the UHPGB.

Again a reminder to us all--Oregonians have a constitutional right to affordable health care and Oregon has a health equity goal by 2030. The more than 50 volunteers are directly working diligently to make it so.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

With Gratitude,

Tom Sincic, MSN, FNP Retired