



February 10, 2025

TO: Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

FR: Paloma Sparks, Oregon Business & Industry

RE: Oregon Business and Industry's Support of HB 2690

Chair Nosse, members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care. For the record, I am Paloma Sparks, Executive Vice President & General Counsel for Oregon Business & Industry (OBI).

OBI is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and from each of Oregon's 36 counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Our 1,600 member companies, over 75% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians. Oregon's private sector businesses help drive a healthy, prosperous economy for the benefit of everyone.

OBI supports HB 2690, which would establish a Health Insurance Mandate Review Advisory Committee composed of a balanced group of stakeholders – including legislators, insurers, health care providers, businesses and consumers.

Mandates typically apply to individual, small group and large group plans, and each proposed mandate layers on top of existing and other new mandates. All of them have a multiplying effect on healthcare costs. Each year, carriers file new rates that reflect the increases associated with new mandates, which drive up the costs of health care to small businesses and their employees over time. Currently, the only fiscal impact analysis associated with new mandates that are measured are the impacts on the state agencies that administer them and only on each individual mandate proposal, rather than the cumulative impact. There is no analysis of the economic impact mandates have on employers and employees who pay insurance premiums. HB 2690 will help legislators understand how premium impacts associated with new mandates affect employers.

Currently, proposed mandates are considered on a one-off basis without a holistic examination of need, cost, national best practices, or other considerations. OBI believes that the Health Insurance Mandate Review Advisory Committee will provide a timely, thoughtful, balanced and holistic review process that will weigh the overall impact and best course of action for consumers, providers and payers. We believe this sound and reasonable approach will allow for appropriate expansion of coverage.

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