

Submitter: DANIEL Lasoff
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB951

I am writing to voice my strong endorsement of SB 951, a crucial bill that upholds the integrity of medical practice in Oregon by ensuring that physicians retain ultimate authority over decisions affecting patient care.

As a physician, my career has been dedicated to the health and well-being of my patients. I have completed years of rigorous medical training, taken an oath to prioritize patient welfare, and built my practice on the trust patients place in me. At the same time, I understand the challenges of maintaining a financially viable practice while providing ethical, patient-centered care. This balance is the foundation of our healthcare system, reinforced by Oregon's corporate practice of medicine doctrine, which has been in place since 1947 and is also recognized in over 30 other states.

However, vertically integrated insurance companies and private equity firms often operate with different priorities. Their primary responsibility is to shareholders and investors, focusing on financial gains rather than patient outcomes. Unlike physicians, they are not bound by an ethical duty to prioritize patient welfare, nor do they bear the responsibility of making clinical decisions in the best interest of those they serve. Their profit-driven approach frequently results in the denial of medically necessary care, reductions in essential staff, and an emphasis on high-margin, low-value treatments. These tactics not only compromise patient health but also place undue strain on physicians and frontline healthcare providers. Without robust protections like those in SB 951, these corporate influences will continue to erode physician-led decision-making, placing profits above the well-being of Oregon's communities.

Oregon has already experienced the consequences of this issue. At the Oregon Medical Group, corporate restructuring abruptly severed patients from their longtime doctors, disrupting continuity of care and leaving many struggling to find new providers in an already strained system. These decisions were not made based on medical necessity or evidence-based care but rather by corporate executives prioritizing financial interests. When business considerations take precedence over patient care, the result is worse health outcomes, added pressure on healthcare workers, and diminished trust in our medical system. Since 2020, similar disruptions have continued to unfold across the state.

This legislation is not extreme. SB 951 does not prohibit private equity investment in healthcare, nor does it prevent professional medical entities from working with

Management Services Organizations for business operations. It simply ensures that physicians maintain final authority over clinical decisions that directly impact patient health and safety.

SB 951 is a necessary and reasonable measure to close existing loopholes and restore medical decision-making to those who are trained, licensed, and ethically committed to patient care. Oregon's physicians must be empowered to make medical decisions based on science, evidence, and individual patient needs.

I urge strong support for SB 951 as a critical step in protecting the integrity of our healthcare system.

Best,
Daniel Lasoff