

Submitter: David Norris
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB951
From:
David Norris, MD, MBA, CPE
The Association for Independent Medicine, Treasurer

Subject: Support for SB 951 – Protecting Medical Integrity in Oregon

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for SB 951, a critical piece of legislation that upholds the integrity of medical practice in Oregon by ensuring that physicians retain the ultimate authority over decisions that impact patient care.

As a physician, my commitment has always been to my patients' well-being. Years of medical training, adherence to the highest ethical standards, and a sworn duty to prioritize patient health define my profession. However, maintaining a medical practice also requires balancing ethical patient care with financial sustainability—an equilibrium that has long been protected by Oregon's corporate practice of medicine doctrine, in place since 1947 and echoed by more than 30 other states.

Unfortunately, vertically integrated insurance companies and private equity firms do not share this commitment. Their primary obligation is to shareholders and investors, with financial returns taking precedence over patient welfare. Unlike physicians, these entities are not bound by a medical oath or the ethical responsibility to make clinical decisions in the best interest of those they serve. Instead, their business model often incentivizes denying medically necessary care, reducing critical support staff, and prioritizing high-margin, low-value treatments—actions that harm patients, overburden physicians, and erode trust in our healthcare system. Without legislative safeguards like SB 951, these corporate interests will continue encroaching on medical decision-making, putting profit ahead of patient health.

Oregon has already witnessed the consequences of corporate interference in healthcare. The Oregon Medical Group's corporate restructuring abruptly severed patients from their longtime doctors, disrupting continuity of care and forcing many to navigate an already overburdened system. These changes were not driven by medical necessity or evidence-based decision-making but by business executives prioritizing financial outcomes over patient health. Since 2020, similar corporate-driven disruptions have persisted statewide, further destabilizing our healthcare system.

SB 951 is a reasonable and necessary safeguard—not a radical measure. It does not ban private equity investment in healthcare or prohibit medical entities from contracting with management service organizations for administrative support. It simply ensures that clinical decision-making remains in the hands of those who are trained, licensed, and ethically bound to care for patients. By closing loopholes that allow corporate entities to dictate medical decisions, this bill reinforces the foundational principles of patient-centered care and medical integrity.

I urge you to support SB 951 as a crucial step in preserving the ethical and professional standards of medicine in Oregon. Physicians must be empowered to make clinical decisions based on science, evidence, and the needs of individual patients—not corporate profit margins.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your leadership in protecting the integrity of our healthcare system.

Sincerely,

David Norris, MD, MBA, CPE

The Association for Independent Medicine, Treasurer

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