

Submitter: Richard Preston III
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB951

Dear members of the committee,

I am writing because it is absolutely imperative that you pass SB 951. Health care is in an incredible crisis, and increasingly the massive, ever consolidating corporations that control health care and insurance are leveraging a crisis of their own creation to cut staff and patient care to "save costs" while paying their administrations skyrocketing portions of the health care dollar. They oppose this bill because as insurance and the networks face each other, both see a profit to be made by taking from health care workers, overworking them, and giving patients worse care for more money.

As a student physician, moreover an older, nontraditional one, I have made a choice to dedicate my life to the health and well being of my patients at a great personal cost. I have and will continue to undergo years of grueling training under circumstances harsh for a person 20 years my junior and accrue massive amounts of debt because my fundamental wish is to prevent the tragedies I saw as a small town EMT, and I have taken an oath to do so- to place patient above self and to live in the trust that my patients place in me.

I am not a fool; I know that medicine is a business, and that it must be financially sustainable- but also that that business practice must be circumscribed by the responsibilities of ethical patient care. This balance is a core of our healthcare system, as laid out by the corporate practice of medicine doctrine that has existed in Oregon since 1947—a doctrine which more than 30 other states have also adopted.

To a private equity firm, the people of Oregon are parts of parts of numbers on spreadsheets. They do not swear oaths to serve them or do no harm to them- it is in fact their fiduciary obligation to do as little for them as they can. Without rigorous training or obligation, they cannot even be aware of the impact they have on the clinical decisions providers make to best support the people of Oregon. And yet increasingly, with the power of the purse and loopholes in the existing law, these powerful out-of-state entities dictate the health and wellness of the people of Oregon over the people obligate and trained to do so, compromising the standard of care and the practice of medicine within our borders.

We have already seen the real-world consequences of this issue unfold here. At the Oregon Medical Group, corporate restructuring driven by financial interests abruptly severed patients from their longtime doctors, disrupting continuity of care and leaving many scrambling to find new providers in an already overburdened system. This

upheaval wasn't the result of medical necessity or evidence-based decision-making—it was a business decision made by executives with no medical training. When profit-driven entities dictate clinical operations, patient care becomes secondary to financial objectives, leading to worse outcomes, increased strain on remaining providers, and a loss of trust in our healthcare system. Since 2020, this trend has only accelerated. Soon, they will begin shuttering more and more "underperforming" hospitals, whose losses are frequently just debt the purchaser saddled them with for their own purchase- and in doing so harming the vulnerable and the far flung of our state. The people of rural Oregon do not deserve less or lesser care.

This is not a radical proposal. This bill does not ban private equity. It does not prohibit professional medical entities from contracting with Management Services Organizations for business and administrative support. It simply ensures that physicians retain ultimate authority over clinical matters—decisions that directly impact patient health and safety.

SB 951 is necessary and reasonable to close loopholes and restore decision-making power for health care to those who are trained, licensed, and ethically bound to serve their patients- not the quarterly reports of private equity.

Please support SB 951; the care you save may be your own.