

Submitter: Max Higbee

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3923

Chair Nosse, Vice Chair Javadi and Nelson

I am a Max Higbee, a dentist and owner in Redmond Dental Group (RDG). I have been a dentist in Central Oregon in Redmond since 1971. I have had at least 2,000 Medicaid OHP Members in my office since 1996 or 1997. I currently have five dentists in the office including myself. We are currently recruiting another one because one is off due to surgery. We currently have 7,000 members and over 20 employees including 3 hygienists.

HB3923 is the result of what happened to us here at RDG. I support it wholeheartedly to allow providers and patient choice. It really saddens me that people I have been providing and caring for years were prevented from moving with me when I switched from one Dental Care Organization (DCO) to another.

I switched because our enrollment was being limited and was declining and the new DCO allowed more so I could continue to serve my clientele. When I made this switch, I wanted to let my OHP patients know, and I was threatened by the DCO I was leaving with a lawsuit. Since that DCO is owned by a very large out of state corporation with lots of resources, I did not want to try to litigate against them.

When I appealed to the CCO involved they said they did not want to get into contractual disputes between the DCO and I. I then appealed to the OHA who said they would get back to me and never did. I then appealed to the Central Oregon Health Council who under their charter has the duty to be the management committee and to mitigate disputes between Contractors. This finally resulted in some help between the CCO and my new DCO. The problem is it took almost a year to get my numbers up to support my original staffing. This resulted in over \$120,000 loss in revenues and put a lot of pressure on patient care.

Since my dental license is the one everyone in the system looks to for the patients assigned to me and under my care, not all the bureaucrats who propagate and manage the rules. The patients were under my care, not the State, not the CCO, or the DCO. I am worried about patient care continuity, access to care, their oral health, their suffering and my professional obligations.

Thank you,  
Max Higbee, DMD?