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On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB951

As a physician that lives and practices within Benton County in Oregon, I have seen first-hand the devastating effect the purchase of Optum of Corvallis Clinic within our community. As a person that lives and accesses care in Benton County and as a physician that takes care of patients within this community, access to care has dramatically decreased for my patients. The number of physicians leaving that system has created hardship on patients and the surrounding health system. This has multiple downstream effects with both short term and long-term effects that worsen healthcare access and likely outcomes to people in this community.

There are multiple studies that show poorer outcomes and increased cost with corporate ownership and it's chilling effects on healthcare within a community. A systematic review published in the BMJ in 2023 found that corporate ownership is most consistently associated with increases in costs to patients or payers and mixed to harmful impacts on quality of care. This review included studies across various healthcare settings, with a notable focus on nursing homes and hospitals in the United States. The review highlighted that PE ownership often leads to reduced nurse staffing levels or a shift towards a lower nursing skill mix, which can negatively affect patient care quality.[1]

Further, a study in JAMA in 2025 reported that patient care experience worsened after private equity acquisition of hospitals, with significant declines in patient-reported measures such as overall hospital rating and willingness to recommend the hospital.[2] This suggests that private equity ownership may adversely affect patient satisfaction and perceived quality of care.

Additionally, another study in JAMA in 2023 found that private equity acquisition was associated with increased hospital-acquired adverse events, including falls and central line-associated bloodstream infections, indicating potential declines in clinical quality and patient safety.[3]

Corporate business of medicine will cause higher patient expenses and potentially lower quality of care. These findings raise concerns about the alignment of corporate business models with the goals of high-quality, patient-centered healthcare.

References

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