

4.29.25 HEARING TESTIMONY OPPOSING SB 951 – Dr. Russell Massine

- My name is Dr. Russell Massine, and I am a full-time practicing nephrologist and Chief Physician Executive for Summit Health in Bend, Oregon. I have been practicing medicine here for over two decades and serve on my group's Board of Directors.
- **I am testifying today in opposition to Senate Bill 951** because it threatens practices like mine by limiting our ability to remain independent through the support of management partnerships.
- Before teaming up with Summit Health in 2018, our medical group looked at multiple partnership opportunities with hospital systems and other private investors due to revenue shortfalls caused by falling reimbursements and increasing administrative and regulatory complexity.
- Luckily in Summit Health – our MSO partner – we found a partner dedicated to enhancing the provider-patient relationship with a singular focus on improving patient outcomes. Summit's operating model is "physician led and professionally managed," with a local Board of Directors run by physicians in Bend.
- Since partnering, we have become one of America's highest-performing medical practices. Thanks to our MSO partner, our small medical group gained access to expert administrators, care team models, capital investment, and data systems we could not afford alone. As a result, we have more than doubled the number of patients we serve, and the quality of care we provide has shot up. Our customer satisfaction rating has increased from 80% to 95.1%. Our Medicare Quality Score -- which is used by CMS to ensure timely delivery of quality care-- increased from 87% to 100%- and stayed there for 4 years.
- Importantly, none of this has compromised physician autonomy. Our MSO has **never** interfered with clinical decision-making.
- Unfortunately, SB 951 would undermine all this growth. As it endangers the numerous benefits of MSO and physician partnerships by banning dual employment and ownership, which are critical to the partnerships. These features ensure that me and other doctors are the ones who make decisions that may affect our patients. They also ensure that doctors benefit from expert administrators from the MSO, which our small practice could not otherwise have attracted. The dual structure aligns incentives: doctors focus on care, MSOs on admin operations.
- Good policy would encourage more integration between an MSO partner and an independent physician practice, not less.
- In closing, I urge you to vote against SB 951. At a minimum, please amend it to focus solely on preventing corporations from interfering with clinical decision-making, like California is doing through Senate Bill 351. If SB 951 passes as is, Oregonians will have fewer high-quality, affordable care options. Thank you.