

Submitter: Ryan Kearney

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB957

My name is Ryan Kearney and I'm a pediatrician in Central Oregon. I am writing in SUPPORT of SB957. Becoming a physician both demands and exposes us to so much along the journey: hope, tragedy, magic, wonder. I began my own journey primarily because I cared. Yes, I wanted to understand health and illness. But more importantly, I was driven by the desire to help others, to ease suffering, and to hopefully improve lives in my community while making myself and my spheres of influence smile. Fast forward 20 years and it's quite disheartening that much of our healthcare system certainly doesn't care in the way that wide-eyed 20-something year old and most of my peers did back then.

Today, essentially all physician jobs require signing some combination of binding non-compete, non-solicitation, non-disparagement and 'mutual' arbitration agreements. After a debt riddled decade of training, physicians have little say but to accept these terms of employment and the incumbent patient care priorities of the medical system they join, even if they disagree with them. Employment contracts with non-compete clauses lock doctors into often unsustainable systems of care while also dramatically limiting future job choices.

Medical training is so standardized that most medical systems can simply substitute a seemingly similar physician 'cog' into their machine when any individual doctor chooses to go their own way. Unfortunately, the converse is not true and because of non-compete clauses, excellent doctors are often left without viable job choices after deciding to leave one job and seek another.

Physicians want and deserve to own the excellence that many of us have made countless sacrifices to attain and to maintain -- birthdays, weddings, funerals, vacations, relationships, bedtime stories are all just a sample of the personal sacrifices and losses we make continually in the name of patient care. Owning our excellence means having freedom to choose where to work and for whom.

Shame on the corporate boardrooms and the private equity pilferers for making and/or taking advantage of these absurd and prohibitive non-compete causes. I have yet to speak with a physician across the country that disagrees.

Oregon can be a thought leader for the country to change this status quo, one that currently benefits very few. So, I beseech you to please help make a difference and vote for SB975. Thank you.