



June 23, 2025

Re: Support for SB 174

Chair Bowman, Vice Chair Drazan, Vice Chair Pham, and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Health Equity Alliance urges your support of SB 174, Strengthening Consumer Protections in Oregon's Insurance Industry. The bill aims to close a critical gap in consumer protection, ensuring that insurance companies are held to the same ethical standards as other businesses in Oregon.

OHEA is a people of color-led collaborative, organized to center and uplift the wisdom of our communities of color through racial justice informed health equity policies and practices. OHEA serves Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties as one of nine regional health equity coalitions across Oregon.

As an organization that advocates for healthcare access it is important to us that consumer protections are put into place to ensure our community members have the tools they deserve to seek any claims. We also know that community members seek insurance to protect themselves, and their property. It provides a safety net in times of crisis, offering support after accidents, unexpected losses, or serious injuries. When people pay into insurance, they do so with the expectation that companies will honor their commitments when it matters most. We cannot continue to ask them to pay into insurance and then have insurance deny or make their lives impossible when putting forward a claim.

Oregon's insurance industry is currently the only major industry not covered by Oregon's Unlawful Trade Practices Act (UTPA). The insurance industry should be held to the same standards of accountability and transparency as other industries, and Oregon consumers should have the same protections and avenues for recourse when dealing with all industries. As it stands, consumers harmed by fraudulent or unethical insurance practices have limited protections when dealing with bad actors in the industry.

SB 174 would:

- Bring the insurance industry under the scope of the Oregon Unlawful Trade Practices Act and align it with all other major consumer industries.
- Increase consumer trust and confidence in their insurance purchases.

- Provide Oregonians with protections when an insurance company is using deceptive or unfair business practices.

This legislation is backed by community-based organizations across Oregon because it strengthens accountability and ensures that insurers treat people fairly. By reinforcing

consumer protections, this bill helps build trust in the system and delivers real benefits to families and communities statewide, especially those who are often hit hardest by unexpected hardships.

We urge your support of SB 174 to protect Oregonians from fraudulent and unethical insurance practices. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your service to Oregon communities.

Sincerely,

Oregon Health Equity Alliance