



Elizabeth Steiner Hayward MD

Oregon State Senator
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Testimony on SB 440
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Chair Monnes-Anderson and members of the committee, thank you for hearing SB440 and for the opportunity to testify before you today. For the record, I am Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Senate District 17. I'm also a family physician, and immediate past president of the Oregon Academy of Family Physicians. In that role and other roles with the OAFP, I have traveled across this state and appeared in front of this committee and its House counterpart many times discussing how to improve access to high quality, affordable health care for all Oregonians.

As you all know, many of Oregon's rural and underserved communities face a shortage of primary care providers. This shortage will become even more significant as of January 1, 2014, when hundreds of thousands more Oregonians have health insurance. As part of Oregon's Medicaid Demonstration, the state agreed to address this problem by funding a loan repayment program for primary care providers who agree to work in rural and underserved communities in the state. SB440, with the -3 amendment, establishes this program within the Oregon Health Authority and appropriates funds to the program. A similar program has existed within Oregon for many years. As you will hear, this program was very successful in bringing much-needed primary care to rural communities, but it has been unfunded since 2009. The new program established in SB440 will replace the existing program, per requirements of the waiver, while building off its institutional knowledge and demonstrated success.

I will let others in the room tell you more about the significant need for this program and how it will help improve access to primary care in our state's most vulnerable communities. I do want to mention, however, that in addition to improving the health of Oregonians, I see this bill as an opportunity to improve the economies of these same communities. A study recently released by the Oregon Healthcare Workforce Institute analyzed the economic contributions of Oregon's physicians. It found that at the county level, each physician:

- Adds 8 to 40 direct jobs and a total of 11 to 52 jobs when indirect and induced jobs are considered;
- Contributes \$700,000 to \$2.9 million to GDP annually;
- Generates between \$60,000 and \$220,000 in state and local taxes annually.

As I hope we will convince you today, this program is vital to the future of health care in Oregon. We cannot successfully improve the way we deliver care in the state if we don't have the workforce to do it. Finally, I want to make it clear that the funding for this biennium is necessary but not sufficient for addressing the health care workforce shortage Oregon faces. I

would hope that future legislative assemblies will continue to fund this vitally important program at as high a level as possible. I appreciate your consideration and am happy to answer any questions.