



Bringing people together
to improve health care and health

March 29, 2013

Representative Mitch Greenlick, Chair Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chair
Representative Jim Thompson, Vice-Chair House Health Care Committee
Oregon Legislative Assembly

RE: HB 2611

We Can Do Better endorsed SB 97 during the 2011 Legislative session – the first time that our organization ever endorsed a bill. Our Community Leadership Council (CLC) felt strongly that in order to achieve the Triple Aim, providers must be adequately prepared to care for the diversity of patients and community members who will come to them for services.

HB 2611 creates a path to making this a reality in Oregon, and our CLC again endorses the strategy, believing that it will improve the experience of care for both patients and providers. Cultural Competence training also leads to improved patient outcomes. Unfortunately today patients from many communities experience barriers to good quality healthcare – barriers that can be overcome.

Within minority populations patients don't have the same access. Health screenings are offered less frequently, access to medical interpretation is denied, and outright discrimination or refusal of care occurs daily. I have experienced this in real life.

HB 2611 would be a significant first step to meet the demand of the growing diversity of our state and nation, and an acknowledgement that we intend to improve the health of all populations in our state. The values of cultural competence should permeate our health care system already but there is no current system wide adoption of cultural competence standards or training. Physicians and other health care professionals should take the lead in adopting cultural competency requirements, so that together we can begin to remove these barriers and build a healthier Oregon.

We Can Do Better is asking for your support on HB 2611. Thank you for your consideration.

Liz Baxter, Executive Director
We Can Do Better