

March 29, 2013

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

Re: HB 3407

Dear Chair Greenlick, Vice-Chairs Keny-Guyer and Thompson, and Members of the Committee:

OSPIRG supports HB 3407 as an important next step in building the workforce Oregon needs to make our health care system work better for consumers.

Studies have shown that a third or more of all health care spending is spent in ways that do not improve health. In the face of this mounting evidence, it is good news that Oregon policymakers and health care leaders are focusing attention on reining in health care costs by cutting waste and focusing on prevention, not by cutting care and passing more costs on to Oregonians. Traditional Health Workers are a key piece of this puzzle, serving the health needs of Oregonians in communities across the state by providing effective preventive services at a very low cost.

Traditional Health Workers (Community Health Workers, Peer Wellness Specialists, Personal Health Navigators, and Doulas) are a valued and essential component of Oregon's Health Care Transformation. We believe that these complementary workers are crucial for the success of healthcare transformation as they support the Triple Aim of better care, better health outcomes, and lowered costs.

We support the principle that Traditional Health Workers should inform and shape policy regarding their own profession. We believe that a diverse workforce is essential to ensuring a healthy Oregon for all.

Please vote YES on HB 3407 and support our work to have meaningful participation from Traditional Health Workers in creating policy for their own profession.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jesse Ellis O'Brien
OSPIRG Health Care Advocate