

April 5, 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 3407**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.  
My name is Lizzie Fussell. I work for the Oregon Latino  
Health Coalition as the Coordinator of the Oregon  
Community Health Worker Association (ORCHWA),  
which is the professional association for community health  
workers in Oregon. We are a membership organization, led  
and directed by CHWs.

Community health workers and other traditional health  
workers: peer wellness specialists, personal health  
navigators, and doulas, play a vital role in facilitating  
health care access to rural and other underserved  
communities, while addressing healthcare disparities and  
improving health outcomes.

HB 3650, passed during the 2011 legislative session,  
requires that members enrolled in Oregon's Coordinated  
Care Organizations (CCO's) have access to Traditional  
Health Workers to facilitate culturally and linguistically  
appropriate care. The Office of Equity & Inclusion at the

OHA has done a tremendous amount of work to further develop and bring recognition to this workforce.

HB3407 builds upon this work, formalizing the existing Non Traditional Health Worker Committee and converting it to the Traditional Health Workers Commission. This commission will work in collaboration with the OHA, to serve as the rule-making body to ensure appropriate training and standards are in place to prepare both workers and health systems for successful healthcare transformation.

While this is primarily a housekeeping bill, it does make one substantive change in that it prescribes increased participation from the workers themselves, aligning with the principle that Traditional Health Workers should help inform and shape policy regarding their own profession. It also ensures the participation of important stakeholders such as employers, trainers, CCOs, providers, and consumers.

Traditional health workers are crucial to the success of healthcare transformation and are a proven strategy for improving patient care, improving community health, and helping to bend the cost curve— all elements of the Triple Aim.

We hope you join us in supporting this important bill and vital workforce. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you.