



March 21, 2013

Representative Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair
Representative Jeff Kruse, Vice-Chair
Representative Tim Knopp
Representative Chip Shields
Representative Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Senate Health Care and Human Services
Oregon Legislative Assembly

Re: HB 2134

Dear Chair Anderson, Vice-Chair Kruse, and Members of the Committee:

Oregon's current data collection policies are insufficient and too inconsistent to support the needs of Oregon's diverse communities. The information needed to address health disparities and ensure optimal care to culturally and linguistically diverse populations is not currently available. Current data collection practices tend to lump together large swaths of communities of color without identifying the specific needs and priorities of many sub-groups and communities.

In Oregon, as well as across the nation, communities of color have worse overall health outcomes than almost every other group. At Upstream Public Health, we work to ensure every Oregonian has the chance to achieve their full health potential. We believe that no one should be disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position, race, ability, language or cultural background.

Unfortunately, many of these communities are not receiving culturally and linguistically appropriate care and services, largely because of the lack of accurate, consistent data on culturally and linguistically appropriate care. Oregon's health care transformation provides us with an opportunity to improve how we provide health care and services to our most vulnerable populations. Accurate, consistent and meaningful data collection is a critical component of this goal, making it possible for providers to refine and improve the quality of care for their patients and clients while maximizing limited resources.

Please vote YES on HB 2134 and support work to have meaningful, consistent, and accurate data collection in health and human services.

Sincerely,

Mel Rader

Co-Director, Upstream Public Health