

February 14, 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 2134

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

As a public health professor, and a community-based researcher who partners with Oregon communities, non-profits, and local health departments, I am acutely aware of the inadequacies of the current data systems. Incomplete data and inaccurate racial/ethnic classification make it difficult to address health inequity rigorously and thoroughly. We are missing an opportunity because we know too little about who is disproportionately burdened with poor health and inadequate conditions.

The best way to promote the Triple Aim goal of lower costs, better healthcare, and better outcomes is through providing the same high level of health care and human services to all Oregonians. Despite our work, we know that some communities have poorer health outcomes than others and that these barriers to health include inaccurate and inconsistent data and a lack of culturally & linguistically appropriate care. Understanding Oregon's changing population and creating a local set of best practices that complies with national standards is a necessary step to removing health disparities in Oregon.

Oregon's health care transformation has the goal of providing the health care and services that all Oregonians need to be healthy. Our system needs to be targeted and data-driven to provide more effective and efficient care for all Oregonians. Accurate, consistent and meaningful data collection is a crucial component of this goal, making it possible for providers to refine and improve the quality of care for their patients and clients, while maximizing our limited resources.

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

Thank you for your consideration,

Stephanie A. Farquhar, PhD
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