

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

My name is Devin Hunter and I would like to express my support for House Bill 2922. As a younger worker, I have spent most of my adult life either uninsured or covered by insurance with a high deductible plan. This wasn't a big deal when I was younger, but over the last few years, I have realized how expensive the current model is to both workers and employers.

I have spent the last few years as an educational support staff member of Hillsboro High School and as a member of HCU Local 4671. As a graduate of this school, I had a strong connection to the school and wanted to do my part after graduation to help make it a great learning community. For the first few years, I was happily coming to work each day maintaining the approximately 500 computers that were used by staff and students. I was really good at my job, consistently scoring high marks in every performance review and getting along well with the other staff. After school finished for the day, I would spend additional time as a Robotics coach, helping students build robots while working in small teams. I loved it, despite making only \$1,900 a month before taxes.

Five years later, I was still making \$1,900 a month. I paid rent, balanced my budget, and made choices about my healthcare. My employer provided me with healthcare options starting at about \$1000 a month with a \$1000 employer contribution to whichever plan I chose. Because of the employer contribution, my plan was technically free healthcare, but it had a high deductible. If I got hurt, I would be required to pay almost 20% of my yearly net income before I reached my deductible. This was money that I didn't have. I barely had enough money to buy food each month.

This economic reality forced me to look for another job. It was a tough decision to make since I really loved serving my community by helping to educate the next generation. Fortunately, there was an opening somewhere else in the district and I was able to move to a better paying job. A job that allows me to afford a better health care plan. Now I no longer live in constant fear of a single injury forcing me into bankruptcy, but I am a rare exception. I look around, and see many of my coworkers that are struggling to find affordable health care. They were where I was last year, unable to afford proper care and resorting to hope and luck to keep them healthy.

So I ask that support House Bill 2922. The insurance industry has had a chance to solve the health care crisis and yet people are still going bankrupt trying to get healthy. Their premiums continue to rise without any improvement to the medical care they receive. A community of healthy people, who can afford to see a doctor regularly, is a more productive community. We are a nation that stands united to help each other on things like natural disaster relief, food assistance for the hungry, security from foreign threats, and safe air travel. Where is our unity when it comes to healing the sick?

Thank you for your time

Devin Hunter - Concerned citizen