



May 1, 2013

Representative Chris Garrett, Chair  
Representative Wally Hicks, Vice-Chair  
Representative Val Hoyle, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Rules  
Oregon Legislative Assembly

RE: HB 3309

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice-Chairs Hicks and Hoyle, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA) I respectfully request that you oppose HB 3309. OPCA is a non-profit membership organization comprising Oregon's 31 community health centers. Our members operate 201 health clinics statewide that provide coordinated care to 330,000 rural and/or medically underserved patients annually. Oregon's community health centers are medical homes that provide integrated and coordinated physical, oral and behavioral health services to our patients.

HB 3309 is a State bill to resolve a local dispute in Marion and Polk Counties. While the intentions of the supporters of this bill are to resolve the unfortunate local CCO spat, the ramifications of this State bill for that local problem could be bad for the health of low-income Oregonians.

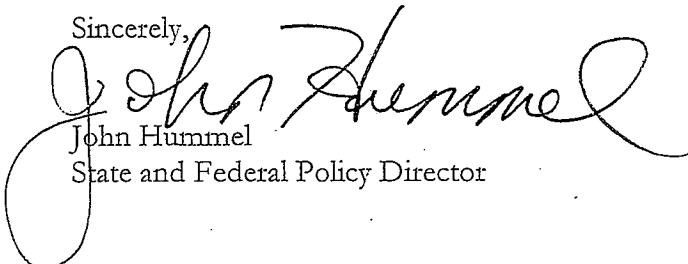
Specifically, this bill would allow a member of a CCO board to be removed by a two-thirds vote of the CCO board. If a member of the board is removed, then the entity they represent would be penalized through a reduced reimbursement rate of 58 percent of Medicare, regardless of provider type. What if this provider is a community health center or another safety-net provider? Such a significant reduction in their reimbursement rate could imperil the ability of this provider to continue providing high-quality care to low-income patients.

I appreciate that it is not the intent of the supporters of HB 3309 to put at risk the health of vulnerable Oregonians. With this in mind, I respectfully suggest it is time for this committee to express their displeasure with the parties in Marion and Polk Counties about how they have handled their dispute, but to then allow the policies and procedures of Willamette Valley Community Health to govern the dispute (with the courts available as the final decider should that be necessary).

HB 3309 is well intentioned, but the unintended consequences that could result from its passage warrant the House Rules Committee being the final resting place for this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
John Hummel  
State and Federal Policy Director