



To: House Committee on Healthcare
From: Oregon Health Equity Alliance
Date: February 11, 2015
Re: HB 2626

Chair Greenlick, Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA) would like to express our support for HB 2626. OHEA represents a collective effort of 37 member organizations who work together to make Oregon a more equitable place for all. Our coalition believes every Oregonian should have an equal chance to achieve their full health potential, and that is why we are supporting HB 2626.

School-based health centers (SBHCs) are an important, research-based strategy for creating access to health care and reducing healthcare disparities among low-income and minority children and adolescents.

SBHC development includes an extensive community engagement process to ensure that everything from services to decorations are relevant for the populations being served. Many SBHCs in Oregon offer youth leadership opportunities through their youth advisory councils. Students typically do projects such as identifying health issues in the student population and providing peer education and awareness campaigns.

SBHCs see minority students at a greater rate than the percent of the Oregon population. Black or African American (7% SBHC vs 2% population), American Indian (4% SBHC vs 1.8% population), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (1% SBHC vs .4% population), and Hispanic and Latino (25% SBHC vs 12.3% population). SBHCs should be an essential part of public health solutions that assure equal opportunities for all children to access needed health care services.

OHEA urges your full support of HB 2626. Thank you for your commitment to our communities.

Joseph Santos-Lyons, APANO, OHEA co-Chair
Midge Purcell, Urban League of Portland, OHEA co-Chair