



Legislative Testimony

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

February 12, 2015

The Honorable Sara Gelser, Chair
Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee

RE: Senate Bill 233

Chair Gelser and members of the committee, I am Steve Robbins, Health Services Administrator for the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC). I am here to testify in support of SB 233 and to answer any questions you may have.

What the Bill Does:

SB 233 closes a gap in current state law to authorize and require the State to suspend rather than terminate medical assistance benefits for individuals sentenced to the custody of the DOC. Closing this gap will permit the State to claim federal Medicaid matching funds for hospital inpatient care provided to state prison inmates through the Medical Assistance Programs (MAP), per federal law and regulation, without first reapplying for medical assistance on their behalf.

Background Information:

Under current state law, the Oregon Health Authority and Department of Human Services are authorized and required to suspend, instead of terminate, medical assistance benefits only for those individuals who are incarcerated for a period of 12 months or less. Because most all individuals sentenced to the custody of the DOC will be incarcerated for a period that exceeds 12 months, unless the Legislative Assembly amends current law to extend this suspension authority for state prison inmates incarcerated for a period that exceeds 12 months, the State must first reapply for medical assistance for these individuals in order for the State to claim federal Medicaid matching funds for hospital inpatient care provided to them while they are incarcerated with the DOC. By extending suspension authority for state prison inmates, it eliminates costly duplication of effort and codifies into statute the ability for the State to continue to benefit from utilizing federal Medicaid matching funds, thus reducing General Fund expenditures.

Requested Action:

For the reasons explained above, the Department of Corrections requests the committee to vote SB 233 out of committee with a do pass recommendation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Submitted by:

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