



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE
IN OPPOSITION TO
HB 2523**

Submitted by
Ramona St. George
President and CEO
Majoris Health Systems Oregon, Inc.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ramona St. George. I am the President and CEO of Majoris Health Systems Oregon, Inc., a certified managed care organization in the Oregon workers compensation system. I am here to provide information in opposition of HB 2523.

First and foremost, I encourage this committee to defer any action on this bill until the Management Labor Advisory Committee (MLAC) has had an opportunity to provide a recommendation. MLAC's purpose in the legislative process is to vet proposals and render a recommendation based on the benefit to the two primary stakeholders in the system – workers and employers, rather than medical providers, attorneys, or MCOs

MCOs are centers of innovation for the delivery of quality, cost-effective delivery of medical care to injured workers. One size does not fit all. Majoris happens to allow chiropractic and naturopathic physicians full attending physician status. Some other MCOs also allow that, and some do not. Flexibility is key in maintaining a healthy, dynamic delivery system, to better adapt to various markets and circumstances (urban vs. rural markets, availability of core types of providers, area industries and injuries types, and trends in overutilization or inappropriate medical care). Creating mandates stifles this flexibility.

In addition, this change will add nothing to the system, as reflected by the data since the last change allowing increased access to chiropractors. In the 2013 Legislature, the requirement for MCO's to allow chiropractors the 'come along' provision for workers subject to MCOs was created. Comparing statistics from 2012, 2013, and 2014 (the first year the change was effective), shows essentially a flat line of approximately 6% of

workers choosing chiropractic care for their workers' compensation claims. In fact, 2013 showed a rate of 6.5% of workers choosing chiropractic, and dropping again to 6.0% in 2014, after the increased access was allowed.

Finally, the language of the bill is problematic. This bill requires attending physician status for chiropractic and naturopathic physicians for 'the life of the claim'. MCOs are required to provide appropriate levels of care for injured workers. Many injuries are best treated by other the provider currently treating, including various levels of specialties with the MD and DO community. MCOs routinely transfer care to a more appropriate level of care. This language would effectively grant chiropractic and naturopathic physicians a greater level of authorization than any other practitioner in the MCO system. I would additionally submit that MCOs should retain the authority to determine the number of visits and time periods allowed prior to a requirement for preauthorization of continued services, consistent with requirements for other forms of treatment.

I encourage the Committee to reject this bill and maintain the efficient, healthy workers' compensation system we have created.

I will be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.