



To: House Committee on Healthcare
From: Oregon Health Equity Alliance
Date: March 6, 2015
Re: HB 2934

Chair Greenlick, Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA) would like to express our support for HB 2934. OHEA represents a collective effort of 38 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 2934.

Many Oregonians still lack health insurance, despite the federal mandate, because even subsidized premiums remain financially unaffordable for many low-income people. Of Oregon's currently uninsured, 70% are low-income or working poor, and many are from communities of color. Additionally, 7,000 Oregonians who would otherwise be eligible for Medicaid are excluded from the program by 1996 Welfare Reform including a number of Pacific Islanders and permanent resident immigrants.

HB 2934 will help create health equity for these communities by establishing a Basic Health Plan (BHP) through a waiver within the ACA, which would expand health care accessibility and affordability to a large group of low-income families. HB 2934 could have **no** impact on the state fund budget, and could require no new structures to implement.

In all 87,600 Oregonians would be eligible for a Basic Health Program. It could offer comprehensive benefits mirroring OHP Plus, benefits that are specifically tailored for a low-income population. This is a clear win-win toward creating health equity in Oregon.

OHEA urges your full support of HB 2934. Thank you for your commitment to our communities.

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