

Chair Monnes Anderson and members of the Senate Health Committee,

I urge you to vote no on [SB 684](#). This bill would permit the Oregon Medical Board to issue a limited license to practice medicine to a physician licensed in another state or country who holds a full-time professor appointment at a school of medicine in this state.

Virtual education and telemedicine is changing the face of medicine. With out-of-state doctors licensed to train and deliver healthcare, face-to-face health care may be a thing of the past.

This is a problem that deserves greater scrutiny than giving the OBME carte blanche to license out-of-state physicians who are full-time professors. **I recommend that the legislature convene a task force to advise the OMBE on out-of-state licenses. We need this to ensure medical students are competently trained and that health care is delivered with confidentiality and safety in mind.**

I assume SB 684 addresses problems arising with the new medical school in Oregon, Western University of Health Sciences in Lebanon.^[1] Opened in 2011, this private school is part of the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific based in Pomona, California. As reported in the Oregonian, about 80 percent of the instruction is long distance.^[2]

The tuition for this school? It's certainly not apparent at the school's website.^[3] Instead there's a fuzzy essay on cost and price and the "important fact... that full tuition at Western University covers only about 85 percent of what it actually costs to educate a student." The "value" of this investment has to be compared to an expensive car.

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine lists tuition and fees for public and private schools.^[4] Western University of Health Sciences \$52,255 tuition and fees is ~\$6,500 more than the average private osteopathic medical school. There are only six public osteopathic schools, which are on average ~\$15,000 less expensive than private osteopathic schools for in-state students.

Certainly, the legislature might ask the first graduating class of 2015 what they think of the “value” of their education ten years from now.

(Of course, it would be unfair to not point out that the \$44,809 OHSU medical school tuition and fees is the third highest in the nation for public in-state tuition[5] according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.)

Regardless, the Oregon Board of Medical Examiners is already issuing licenses to out-of-state doctors to practice telemedicine. I have already alerted your committee to this problem in giving testimony on SB 144 when I wrote about how the HIPAA security rule does not apply to telemedicine and I detailed my experience with Doctors on Demand.

I will repeat an excerpt of that testimony for re-emphasis:

Doctor on Demand requires Google Chrome and a Google app[6]; and Doctor on Demand is part of the Google Ventures Life Science & Health portfolio.[7] Eric Schmidt, Executive Chairman of Google once said “Google policy is to get right up to the creepy line and not cross it.[8]”

WebMD interviewed Dr. Phil talking about Doctor on Demand at a recent digital health summit.[9]

~1:38 We're very excited now because we've just added mental health services to that.

~3:00 You're able to go through; select a therapist; schedule an appointment; and see that person on an ongoing basis. And you can do it with the anonymity from your own home.

Then at 4:52 it gets creepy. Dr. Phil encourages opening email exchanges of arguments with a significant other or uploading a photograph of what might be marijuana in a teenage son’s sock drawer.

To learn more, I called up Doctor on Demand. There was no answer at the patient support line. I did get through when I called the Doctor Support line. I was told two doctors were immediately available for the "digital urgent care." \$40 for 15 min. UnitedHealth Care plans are covering Doctor on Demand visits.

- Christopher Pedersen[10] is not listed at the Doctor on Demand website. He received an Oregon license (MD 169060) for telemedicine on 12/23/14. He lives in Las Vegas.

- Dr. Kristin Dean is listed for pediatrics at Doctor on Demand[11] and lives and is licensed in California[12] (License Number: 118149), but **she has no license to practice in Oregon.**

The Oregon Board of Medical Examiners generates fees for licenses to give patients confidence that their care will exceed minimal safety standards. **How many other out-of-state doctors have been granted licenses to practice telemedicine by the OBME?**

With Senator Beyer excused from voting on March 10th, SB 144 sailed through the Senate. Clearly no one on this committee spoke of my concerns about licensing out-of-state physicians for telemedicine. Nor was there a peep that a non-licensed physician could do so as well.

Investors in Zoomcare's[13] health care delivery model surely understand that physician emails and correspondences could generate income. The real question is whether telemedicine affords patients the same level of care as face-to-face *diagnostic care*.

Since my testimony in February, the price for Skype TakeOut@[14] has risen \$4. No doubt, employers will view the Google brand of telemedicine, priced at \$40, as far more attractive—*even if physicians are out-of-state and unlicensed.*

Please DO NOT PASS THIS BILL. Instead, convene a task force that will advise the OMBE on out-of-state licenses to assure medical students are competently trained and to assure that health care is delivered with confidentiality and safety in mind.

Kris Alman MD

[1] <http://www.kval.com/news/local/126463178.html>

[2] http://www.oregonlive.com/health/index.ssf/2011/07/osteopathic_medical_school_to.html

[3] <http://www.westernu.edu/university/university-value/>

[4] <http://www.aacom.org/docs/default-source/data-and-trends/osteopathic-college-tuition-and-fees-%281st-year%29-2014-15-and-historicalFDF15CC80141.pdf?sfvrsn=4> 2011-12 tuition and fees of \$47,555 was ~\$5000 less per year.

[5] https://services.aamc.org/tsfreports/report.cfm?order_by=tot_res_fee_sort&year_of_study=2015&select_control=PUB

[6] https://patient.doctorondemand.com/patient/non_chrome/

[7] <http://www.gv.com/portfolio/>

[8] <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2013/aug/14/google-gmail-users-privacy-email-lawsuit>

[9] <http://digitalhealthsummit.com/live/> <http://digitalhealthsummit.com/2015-speakers/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tf7NOwPrSA>

[10] <https://techmedweb.omb.state.or.us/Clients/ORMB/Public/VerificationDetails.aspx?EntityID=1476978>

[11] <http://www.doctorondemand.com/kristen-dean>

[12] <https://www.breeze.ca.gov/datamart/searchLicTypeByName.do?direct=true>

[13] <http://www.opb.org/radio/programs/thinkoutloud/segment/is-zoomcare-the-wave-of-the-future/>

[14] <https://www.zoomcare.com/info/services-prices> \$85 in Feb; \$89 currently

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