



Testimony of Upstream Public Health

To: House Health Care Committee
Re: In support of HB 3517
Date: April 15, 2015

Chair Greenlick and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kasandra Griffin and I work for Upstream Public Health. We are a statewide organization that works to ensure that all Oregonians have equal access to good health. Specifically, we focus on the social determinants of health – factors such as address, race, and income, which are responsible for unfair and avoidable differences in health status. We work on policies to close those gaps.

I'm here also as a member of the Oregon Health Equity Alliance, and also on behalf of the Healthy Kids Learn Better Coalition, which I currently chair. Both of those coalitions have endorsed this proposal.

The Healthy Kids Learn Better coalition believes, as our name says, that health is a critical element in education. Additionally, people who do well in school get more education, and are then healthier and more successful throughout their lives, so it's a virtuous cycle of benefit, *if* people get a healthy start.

Oregon *needs* the next generation of kids to be healthy and strong so that they can be our future business leaders, doctors, teachers, nurses, and politicians.

These are Oregon's kids. HB 3517 will fix Oregon's statutes that exclude some of Oregon's children from medical assistance. The exclusions these children face undermines the health of all Oregonians. We have a public health responsibility to ensure and protect the health of every Oregonian and their communities from preventable and serious public health threats.

We are joining our colleagues in asking you to pass House Bill 3517.
Thank you for your time,

Kasandra Griffin
Policy Manager, Food and School Health