



February 3, 2016

Chair Keny-Guyer and Members of the House Committee on Housing and Human Services,

Thank you for the opportunity to express Oregon Primary Care Association's support of HB 4042. This bill supports the basic needs for a vulnerable population while they await social security benefits. This is a basic way to ensure that vulnerable individuals do not deteriorate in this time period.

OPCA is the association of Oregon's 33 Community Health Centers (also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers – or FQHCs). These nonprofit health centers operate more than 200 health clinic sites across the state, and are where over 393,000 Oregonians receive primary care – including integrated medical, dental and behavioral health services.

As primary care providers for many of Oregon's underserved communities, Community Health Centers respond to the needs of uninsured and underinsured Oregonians we serve, including Oregonians seeking social security benefits. These are complex and time-consuming applications. A member organization, Central City Concern, has staff dedicated to helping its clients and patients navigate the complex process of applying for social security benefits.

Reinstating general assistance funding would help our vulnerable clients stay housed and stable while awaiting their benefits, and would significantly improve their lives in this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 4042

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