



House Health Committee: Testimony of John Mullin, Legislative Advocate

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Basic Health: HB 4017 February 5, 2016

Mr. Chair, members of the committee, I am pleased to have this opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 4017. The Oregon Law Center's (OLC) mission is to "achieve justice for the low- income communities of Oregon." Consistent with our mission, I have been pleased to work with a great group of advocates in the Inclusion, Affordability, and Innovation Coalition.

As we look back over the years since the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), advocates have been analyzing and speaking out on issues related to excluded populations, namely Legally Present Residents (LPRs) and the Compact of Free Association population. In addition, even with the ACA expansion of Medicaid and insurance plans available on the exchange, we know that lower income individuals and families struggle to pay premiums and out of pocket costs.

This is why we have continued to work on the Basic Health option under the ACA. In addition, we have also examined broader waiver authority under section 1332 of the act.

HB 4017 continues the journey, and we are optimistic that we can design and implement innovative approaches to ensure inclusion and affordability. We have appreciated the cooperation of the Oregon Health Authority and the Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) in forming a body of work that includes a major study by Wakely in 2014, made possible by HB 4109, and the 2015 stakeholder design report, enabled by HB 2934. The Legislature, and this committee in particular, has been engaged every step along the way.

Additionally, I would like to commend DCBS for working with us on the -2 amendments to HB 4017, which represents consensus for moving forward to the next stage, which will include a specific "blueprint" for Oregon for the Legislature to consider.

I urge support of HB 4017 with the -2 amendments, and look forward to working collaboratively on implementation of this important bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

