



February 22, 2016

Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Human Services,

Thank you for the opportunity to express Oregon Primary Care Association's support of health coverage for all children, which makes it possible for more children to be eligible for medical care and access the health services that would give them the healthiest start to their lives. Extending coverage to these children is the right thing to do.

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 in many Oregon's rural and urban communities, Community Health Centers work with the needs of young, uninsured Oregonians we serve. We know that these children have limited options to access care, and their families are likely to be low-income and tend to work for employers that do not offer family health insurance benefits.

Providing healthcare coverage for these children is an opportunity to change the future of these children and of their families. We know that having access to health services, like Medicaid, can have long-lasting and permanent effects on these children, resulting in greater health as adolescents, greater academic achievement, and increased economic opportunity<sup>1</sup>.

We appreciate the opportunity to speak in support of healthcare coverage for all children.

Victoria Demchak, Policy Analyst

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<sup>1</sup> Chester and Alker. "Medicaid at 50: A Look at the Long-Term Benefits of Childhood Medicaid". Georgetown University Health Policy Institute. 2015. [http://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Medicaid-at-50\\_final.pdf](http://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Medicaid-at-50_final.pdf)