



Date: September 13, 2017
To: Joint Committee on Referendum 301
From: Trent Lutz, Oregon Education Association
Re: Referendum 301

Co-Chairs Devlin and Rayfield,

The Oregon Education Association respectfully submits comments on the ballot title under consideration for referendum 301.

The Oregon Education Association represents over 44,000 members across the state of Oregon. Our members are educators working in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 public schools and community colleges. OEA's membership includes licensed teachers and specialists, classified/education support professionals (ESPs), community college faculty, retired educators, and student members. Our members work with students and families who could be drastically impacted by referendum 301.

The proposed ballot title does not adequately explain the impact that the proposed measure would have on the lives of Oregonians. We believe the title leaves out critical information about how healthcare premiums would increase and the funding that would be lost if House Bill 2391 is repealed. Voters deserve to have fair and accurate information about what they are voting on.

We urge this committee to ensure that the approved title for this ballot measure explicitly states how many individual Oregonians could lose healthcare coverage if HB 2391 is repealed. Voters must have accurate information presented to them about the impact of their vote.

As educators, we are particularly concerned that without provider assessment funds the state will be forced to make impossible decisions about who maintains healthcare coverage and who does not. Certain populations are protected from losing coverage under federal law but unfortunately some are not, including children whose families are above a certain income threshold. Access to healthcare is critical for children to be successful in their academic pursuits. This ballot title could impact access to healthcare for children in Oregon and voters need to know this possibility when presented with information about referendum 301.

We urge this committee to accurately reflect through the ballot title what the direct impact of this referendum could be to Oregonians. Voters deserve accurate information about the loss of millions of dollars in state and federal funding and the healthcare of 375,000 Oregonians being put in jeopardy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Trent Lutz

Oregon Education Association