

From the desk of  
Representative Teresa



Alonso  
Leon

## **SUPPORT HB 2391, HEALTH CARE PROVIDER TAX**

Oregon is one of five states leading the nation in evidence-based health care policymaking by developing processes and tools that use evidence to inform policy and budget decisions. Oregon is providing better health outcomes at a lower cost and is ranked eleventh nationally in return on investment.

But none of this means anything if Oregon doesn't continue its investment in the people who need the Medicaid services that serve to provide healthcare access, prevent illness and chronic disease and ultimately help prevent premature death. HB 2391 provides that needed investment.

Medicaid coverage for children and youth has decreased high school dropout rates, hospitalizations, and adolescent mortality rates, while raising income, wealth, and college graduation rates. Medicaid payments account for two out of every three federal dollars that come to Oregon. Thanks to Medicaid, Oregon has been able to give kids a healthy start in life and to provide health care to pregnant women and low-income working families.

More than one in four Oregonians is enrolled in Medicaid. This number is just over 1,100,000 total people on the Oregon Health Plan. The counties with the highest percent of the populations served—all at over a third of the population—are Oregon's rural counties in Jefferson, Jackson and Malheur Counties. Nearly forty percent of OHP members between the ages of 19-64 hold some type of employment and 8 percent are employed more than full-time. Medicaid plays a particularly vital role for Oregon children. Nearly 42 percent of Oregonians under age 19 are insured by OHP.

These aren't merely simple facts and figures. Medicaid plays a vital role in making sure our kids get a healthy start in life, they arrive at school immunized and ready to learn. It means working Oregonians are able to access the preventive health care they need to enter the workforce and are able to receive the treatments they need if they do fall sick so they can return to work and contribute to the state's economy.

The following organizations urge you to support HB 2391 to ensure that Oregon's struggling families have access to the health care they need for our entire state to thrive.