



Memorandum

To: Sen. James Manning Jr., Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Rep. David Gomberg, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

From: Stephanie Castano of the Oregon Primary Care Association

Date: Wednesday, February 6, 2019

Re: Ways & Means subcommittee

Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA) is a non-profit organization that supports Oregon's 32 community health centers, also known as federally qualified health centers. Oregon's community health centers deliver integrated primary care, including dental and behavioral health services, to over 430,000 Oregonians annually. OPCA's mission is to lead the transformation of primary care to achieve health equity for all. Oregon community health centers are providers within the Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) networks, providing care to some of Oregon's most vulnerable populations, including one in four Oregon Health Plan members and an estimated 70,000 uninsured potential Marketplace eligible Oregonians¹

I am honored to testify on behalf of OPCA in support of the Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) and their work to increase access and participation in Oregon's Health Insurance Marketplace. OPCA has worked closely with DCBS over the last four years to ensure Oregon's most vulnerable have access to information and expert assistance to enroll in and utilize health plans on healthcare.gov. We can confirm that DCBS is dedicated to leading Oregon's efforts to connect Oregonians to health plans.

DCBS' support has been crucial for community health centers who are serving a majority of Oregon's uninsured and marketplace eligible populations. OPCA's role as a member of the Oregon Health Insurance Marketplace Advisory Committee has been to support DCBS as they lead on:

- Offering grant and training opportunities to community-based organizations (such as community health centers) to increase the number of free, in-person enrollment services available
- Launching thoughtful and culturally appropriate public-information campaigns for open enrollment when information from the federal governments was scarce
- Directing and sustaining a first of its kind Compact of Free Association (COFA) Premium Assistance Program focused on a population that would have experienced major barriers to access affordable care available to them
- Maintaining open dialog with partners and stakeholders about policy changes proposed at the state and federal levels

¹ Estimate based off of 2017 Uniform Data System (UDS) of uninsured patients served

- Provide health insurance 101 into communities to share information about coverage and financial assistance options available to Oregonians

These efforts have maximized capacity and knowledge at health centers to better serve and enroll uninsured Oregonians.

Despite the difficulties and uncertainties the country has faced with the Marketplace, DCBS continues to lead and provide invaluable efforts that positively contribute to Oregon's high rate of Marketplace participation. Their ability to be a national leader, local champion, content experts and advocates for Oregon consumers will only grow if fully funded for the next biennium. OPCA urges you to continue your support of DCBS so that they can carry on their commitment to connecting Oregon consumers to health coverage that is essential for the health and wellness of all Oregonians.

Stephanie Castano
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