

To Chair Monnes-Anderson and Committee Members:

I am writing to urge your support of Single Payer Health Care through the passage of SB 770. I recently retired from a 30+ year career in the health and human services field. During my tenure I worked with many individuals and families who were unable to access the basic human right to good healthcare due to a lack of health care coverage.

When the Oregon Health Plan, through the Affordable Care Act, was able to expand Medicaid coverage many of these individuals were able to gain health care coverage for the first time. Unfortunately, there are still gaps that exist for many individuals who remain at risk for health care catastrophes. I can recall one particularly hard-working family that was excited when the primary breadwinner got a promotion and raise that put them just above the poverty level. Unfortunately, their joy quickly dissolved when they discovered they no longer qualified for assistance and the cost of their health care far exceeded the increase in wages.

We continue to encourage people to work hard and get ahead, but for many this only means getting farther behind due to the rising cost of health care. This should not happen in any civilized nation, especially one with the resources and wealth of the United States.

Now is the time for you, as our legislators, to take action to change this paradigm. You have the opportunity to create a system that will improve peoples' lives, end the fear of losing your health care coverage due to employment status and to end the very real situation of personal bankruptcy due to a health care emergency or traumatic condition.

I urge you to put the health care needs of Oregonians at the forefront through the passage of SB 770.

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