

To Chair Monnes-Anderson and Committee Members:

I have worked in health care for 23 years, since the age of 18 when I raised my hand and enlisted to serve as a medical equipment repair technician in the US Army. I spent 8 years at Army hospitals and even served as part of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan (2002-2003). Returning home, I went to work for the Department of Veterans Affairs where I continue to work every day to help deliver safe, timely, equitable, efficient, effective, patient-centered care to America's heroes. Day in and day out I witness the life-changing effect that adequate, comprehensive health care has on a person's life.

While we Veterans had to lay our lives on the line to earn that type of care, I believe all Americans deserve more than access to emergency care, and more than access to health care insurance (which they may or may not be able to afford). Instead, I believe all Americans should have access to universal health care. I believe that SB 770 is the critical next step needed here in Oregon which will create, development, implement, and monitor a publicly-funded, universal health care system for our fellow Oregonians.

However, as someone who holds a masters degree in health administration and a masters degree in business administration, I realize that we must act not simply for moral reasons but for economic reasons as well. I am well versed in the gaps and failures of our U.S. health care system: the gross inefficiencies, the imperfect market, the lack of transparency, and the substantial but inadequate gains made by the Affordable Care Act mean to shore up some of these holes.

Our fragmented, wasteful health care "system" is not a system at all. We have a conglomeration of disparate groups all working in conjunction to cobble together a health care delivery system but this system has two key features: a perverse incentive that puts profits over people, and the characteristic that millions of Americans are left without health care at all, either due to denials of care or because they simply cannot afford care.

This patchwork of groups who serve to finance healthcare, insure for health care, deliver health care, and pay for health care all introduce their own inefficiencies and their own need to shore up their bottom line. The end result? Health care is devouring 18% of GDP here in America. 18 cents out of every dollar that could have gone to education, infrastructure, fighting climate change, emergency preparedness, or towards shoring up the social safety net of an aging nation instead goes to a health care system that never seems to stop raising prices. And with some of the biggest local and national lobbying groups funded by Big Pharma, the medical device industry, and other rent seekers who see health care not as a human right but as a cash cow - well, we must do something truly innovative, transformative and economically smart back home to combat that. A publicly-funded, universal health care system here in Oregon is the answer. And SB 770 will help us get there.

Please support SB 770 and do what Oregonians want - put us on a path to Single Payer with SB 770.

Respectfully,

Valdez G. Bravo, MHA, MBA, FACHE

Healthcare Administrator

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