

To Chair Monnes-Anderson and Committee Members:

Health insurance in its current state is not about health care. I have a number of stories I could share, but the one that is most painful for me concerns my sister-in-law who died too young because her cancer went undiagnosed and untreated for years. She could not afford to go to the doctor when her symptoms first occurred. My brother, a former steel worker, had lost his job when the mills closed. When he lost his job, he also lost health insurance coverage for his family. He worked for a decade after the mill closure struggling to keep his home and support his children, but he could not find a job that offered health insurance and could not afford to purchase a policy that covered the family. By the time my brother did secure another job that offered health insurance, it was too late for his wife. This story has been, and continues to be, repeated far too often. Many of us know individuals who, even now with some type of health insurance whether it is an employer-sponsored plan or purchased on the open market, cannot afford health care due to the exceedingly high cost of deductibles and co-pays that are in addition to the cost of their premiums.

I urge you as our representatives to support SB 770. Our current system is broken and does little to protect our health and well-being. It is a fact that Americans spend far more for health care and receive much less than citizens from many other nations. Let us be intelligent and humane about creating a system where health care is guaranteed for all. We need a system that shifts the current emphasis on profit for insurance companies to a system that ensures that we all have the care we need when and where we need it, no matter who we are, what we do for a living or where we live.

Oregon has an opportunity be a leader in creating a system the puts the health of its people first. I support SB 770 and I urge you to do the same.

Thank you.

Anna Maria Dill

P.O. Box 3363

La Grande, OR 97850