

Dear Senate Committee On Health Care Members,

Due to the short notice I am unable to attend today and am submitting written testimony stating that I oppose SB770.

First, I am very concerned with the number of bills being fast-tracked through the legislative process as “emergencies” and it seems the sole purpose is to prevent hearing from the opposition and referendum. It is the right of the people to be heard both for and against a bill as well as the right to express their opinion through their vote. This overuse of “emergency” bills is government overreach and you are removing the checks and balances that were created to protect us from that very thing. The role of our Senators and Representatives is to work for us and with us, not against us by not allowing us to be heard.

Regarding the bill wording, I am dismayed at the increase in power this bill gives Oregon Health Authority, the lack of choice for the consumer, the removal of the free marketplace and competitive pricing, and this will be managed within budget.

How does Oregon plan to pay for this, especially in light of the current struggle to manage the budget and its \$13 billion dollar deficit? Is your goal to tax the citizens of Oregon to poverty to pay for this? Will this be another Care Oregon disaster?

This bill will cause private health providers to close their businesses and leave Oregon, it will result in families leaving so they have the option of choosing their own healthcare provider and it will cost Oregon revenue. This will not create hospital and pharmaceutical cost transparency and won't help to lower costs. This bill will create high deductibles, high copays, and financial penalties for not buying in.

I am concerned the state of Oregon and Oregon Health Authority will have too much power and control over my health care choices and my health care choices for my children. We should be giving Oregonians more options, but instead, this bill will eliminate them. I don't believe that Oregon Democrats version of “shared responsibility” will not cause more harm than good.

I want to see lower healthcare costs. I want to see better health for every Oregonian. I want to see access to medical coverage for every child and adult in Oregon. I agree this is a very important issue that needs to be reviewed and addressed, but this bill is not the answer. We need to find a more rational and sustainable way to address this need.

Thank you.

Sarah Koeltzow
Oregon Resident, Registered Voter
Concerned Parent and Advocate for Informed Choice