



Memorandum

To: Co-Chair Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair Representative Caddy McKeown,
Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation

From: Danielle Sobel, OPCA State and Federal Policy Director
Marty Carty, OPCA Policy Senior Manager

Date: April 17, 2019

Re: Support for House Bill 2015: Equal Access to Roads Act

On behalf of the Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA), we respectfully request your support for HB 2015.

OPCA is a non-profit organization, with a mission to support Oregon's 32 community health centers, also known as federally qualified health centers, in leading the transformation of primary care to achieve health equity for all. Community health centers deliver integrated primary care, including dental and behavioral health services, **to over 433,000 Oregonians annually**. Community health centers are providers within the CCO networks, providing care to Oregon's underserved populations, including **one in four** Oregon Health Plan members.

Every Oregonian should have access to health care. We know that access to care is one of the single most effective ways to ensure that children and their families receive the preventive health and medical care they need to thrive in school, our workforce, and life. HB 2015 extends driving privileges to Oregonians who meet the qualifications to obtain a standard driver license. This extension ensures that all children and their families have access to the health care services they need in communities where there might not be a health center, pharmacy or local specialty care. Health centers provide essential primary care services, and we know that without transportation to health care, many patients unfortunately delay accessing primary care. Research shows that people with limited transportation don't access preventive medical care as needed, and in as much, face increasing risks of illness and more costly visits to the emergency room.

Beyond medical care, Oregonians need transportation to increase access to a wealth of other resources that are also linked to improved health outcomes and increased health equity. People in our state need to be able to get to everyday things like their jobs, their schools, healthy grocery stores, and community hubs to decrease social isolation. A lack of public transportation outside of Oregon's urban centers makes driving a daily necessity for many aspects of life that we know impact health outcomes

For these reasons, we strongly believe all Oregonians should have access to a driver license. OPCA recognizes that having a driver license not only increases access to health care services, but also a wealth of daily necessities, thereby decreasing health-related disparities. We hope that you will join us in support of HB 2015.