



Sharon Meieran
Multnomah County Commissioner, District 1

To: House Committee on Health Care
From: Sharon Meieran, Multnomah County Commissioner
Date: February 4, 2020
Re: Support for House Joint Resolution 202

Chair Salinas, Vice Chairs Hayden and Nosse, and Members of the Committee,

As a Multnomah County Commissioner and a practicing emergency physician, I am very proud to support House Joint Resolution 202 which would further codify our state's commitment to ensuring that every Oregonian has real access to cost-effective, clinically appropriate and affordable health care as a fundamental right.

Over the past several years, the Legislature has taken important steps toward equitable, universal access to health care, most recently with passage of Senate Bill 770 in 2019. That bill established the Task Force on Universal Health Care to provide recommendations on providing publicly-funded, equitable, affordable, comprehensive and high quality health care to all Oregon residents. In short, if voters across the state agree that meaningful access to affordable health care is a fundamental, human right, we have a structure in place through this Task Force to show us how to actually get there.

We *all* benefit when everyone has access to health care -- nobody should have to make the impossible choice between paying their rent and getting a prescription they need, and I know firsthand that access to preventive care is more cost-effective than expensive emergency care. I believe strongly that these values are jointly held by communities across the state, and encourage you to pass HJR 202 as a reflection of this shared commitment to accessible and affordable health care.

Finally, I want to applaud the truly tireless efforts of Representative Mitch Greenlick, one of this measure's Chief Sponsors. Representative Greenlick continues to be an unwavering, persistent leader driving our shared progress to see health care as a fundamental human right.

Thank you for considering this testimony in support of access to healthcare for all Oregonians.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Meieran