



3/2/2021

Attn: Senate Committee on Health Care, Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Knopp and members of the committee

Re: Testimony in support of SB 567

Greetings Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Knopp, and members of the committee. We are writing to you on behalf of the Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA), one of six Regional Health Equity Coalitions (RHECs) across the state.

We work across Washington, Clackamas, and Multnomah counties and we are a people-of-color led collaborative, organized to center and uplift the wisdom of our communities of color through racial justice informed health equity policies and practices as part of the movement to dismantle white supremacy and shift the imbalance of power.

We are writing in support of SB 567, as we believe that all people deserve access to quality, comprehensive health care that is unbiased and culturally responsive. During the global pandemic, our state, like many others, found ourselves in the midst of the need to ration health care, and our outdated crisis care guidelines left communities most impacted out, once again.

We know organizations like Disability Rights Oregon, and others, have seen an increase in complaints of bias and discrimination, during this global pandemic. OHEA stands in solidarity with the organizations at the table, who have been advocating tirelessly for people with disabilities, aging populations and Black, Indigenous, and other people of color communities who have faced discrimination and bias in their treatment by the healthcare system.

SB 567 clarifies that it is unlawful for an individual licensed or certified by a health professional regulatory board, hospital, a long term care facility, an ambulatory surgical center, a freestanding birthing center, an outpatient renal dialysis facility, or an extended stay center to discriminate on the basis of a protected class. In the work we do, we know how important it is for us to be vigilant about the ways in which oppression happens, and to call in when our state can do better at ensuring protections that mitigate suffering and violence.

We believe this is an incredibly important bill and we hope we can count on your support to ensure passage of SB 567.

In health,
Zeenia Junkeer, ND
Director, Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA)