

Re: Cover All People Legislative Concepts

March 15, 2021

Sent via 2021 Regular Session Testimony Submission Form

Dear House Committee on Health Care:

On behalf of Project Access NOW (PANOW), I write to express gratitude for your consideration of the Cover All People legislative concept. PANOW is a non-profit in the tri-county area with a mission to improve our communities' health and well-being by creating access to care, services, and resources for those most in need. We offer a suite of programs that promote access to care and social services, regardless of an individual's insurance status or type. Across all programs, our clients are largely low-income, from immigrant populations, non-English-speaking, and/or undocumented. Last year:

Through our Kaiser Permanente Community Health Coverage Program in partnership with Kaiser Foundation Health Plan North West, since 2019 we have **enrolled just under 1,000 individuals in gold level Kaiser health insurance** with subsidy assistance to eliminate premium and out-of-pocket costs. Individuals enrolled in this program are mostly low income, undocumented, and do not have access to other health care coverage.

Our clients routinely share the impact this program has had on their lives and we wanted to share how. Manuel is a 48. Prior to his enrollment in this program, Manuel experienced a hard fall that seriously injured his shoulder. Because Manuel did not have access to health insurance, he did not go to the emergency room and did not seek medical care, an experience far too common among uninsured immigrants. When he was approved for Kaiser insurance in May of 2019, Manuel immediately established a Primary Care Physician and was able to receive the much-needed surgery on his shoulder and subsequent rehabilitative services. Thanks to this program, he is now completely recovered.

Elena is a 61-year-old with high blood pressure, diabetes, and arthritis in both knees. After her enrollment in the program in February of 2019 she has been able to receive stable treatment and medication, preventing her from needing hospital care for the chronic illnesses she is forced to manage.

Through Project Access NOW's pilot with Kaiser, several members have been able to live out their final days with dignity, because they had access to much needed treatment and palliative care. For one family, the mother was able to receive otherwise inaccessible treatment for her terminal cancer. The son, acting as her authorized representative, has expressed that without access to care through this Kaiser program, the last few months of life with his mother would not have been the same.

We understand the impact of health care coverage on health outcomes and we **are supportive of bills 2164 and 3352 that would increase access to health care coverage for all**. We have seen the impact of this work on a small scale, particularly for our immigrant communities, and are supportive of this Cover All People pilot at

the state level. We are excited at the step in the process and look forward to continuing to be a partner to our clinical counterparts and community members.

Thank you,



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Executive Director