

Testimony for SB 428 and SJR 12

I am submitting testimony for the Senate Hearing on February 24 for SJR 12 and SB 428. Both bills are vital components to transforming our current system of health care in Oregon from one where too many are underinsured without the resources to get care proactively or chronically for physical and mental health conditions and too many only have access to emergency room care or no care at all. I work in our current system of brokering care for patients as a Nurse Practitioner in Oregon. This month I was presented with Juan, a young father in his 30s who has lived and worked in Oregon paying taxes and caring for a wife and two children for the last 5 years. He was recently diagnosed with metastatic thyroid cancer which needs prompt attention to stop the spread of the disease and maintain his life and health. He only qualifies for emergency room care. He attempted to fix this problem 4 times by going to the ED and utilizing the most expensive care in our community. They diagnosed him but could not treat him. It took extensive effort and a local donation to cover all the pre-care requirements for him to go forward with surgical removal of his cancer. This is not efficient, effective equitable care. I implore you to extend the time for the Task Force to do their work at advancing a state-based Medicare program in Oregon and also support SB 428 which will create a strong base for providing high quality care for all residents who live and work in our communities at the time of need without creating financial hardship or a caste system of care.