

I don't know how many of these stories need to be told. People falling through the cracks, people struggling to get care, people unable to buy their medication, runaway pharmaceutical prices, people rationing their life-saving medications, houselessness and bankruptcies due to medical debt, people dying of curable diseases because they could not get the care they needed, having their lives robbed from them...Does this sound like the script of a horror movie?

It is. These horrors are happening right here across the state of Oregon and throughout the nation every day. Tragically, these horrors are preventable.

I am a community organizer. Most recently, my work has been with working class, immigrant and refugee communities. In this role, I have met many people, seen and heard countless stories of tragedy and crisis due to our problematic "healthcare" system. Today I will tell you we must act to make sure that NOT ONE MORE of these stories becomes someone's reality.

This is not just an issue that affects the communities I work with however. I personally have been in a position where I was working full time, with insurance from my employer, but unable to access services I needed due to unaffordable copays and out-of-pocket expenses. I have friends and family who are physicians and nurses who see these situations unfold daily, and are unable to fulfil their duties to help those in medical need, because they are shackled by the restrictions of a cruel and immoral "healthcare" system.

According to the United Nations [Declaration of Human Rights](#)

Article 25

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

According to the United Nations *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*:

Article 12

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

2. The steps to be taken by the States Parties to the present Covenant to achieve the full realization of this right shall include those necessary for:

(a) The provision for the reduction of the stillbirth-rate and of infant mortality and for the healthy development of the child;

(b) The improvement of all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene;

(c) The prevention, treatment and control of epidemic, endemic, occupational and other diseases;

(d) The creation of conditions which would assure to all medical service and medical attention in the event of sickness.

I think it is safe to say that it is high time that we joined the rest of the industrialized nations (and many developing nations) throughout the world in providing universal healthcare services. In the absence of national leadership and in the face of this growing nightmare, Oregon must act and pave the way for a universal healthcare system. This is why I support SJR 12.

Thank you for your time,

Annie Naranjo-Rivera

