

I am Charlie Swanson, from Eugene, and I am speaking on behalf of the more than 100,000 registered Democrats in Lane County, and all of the others who envision a health care system that provides us more freedom.

I am speaking in support of SB 704, to continue the work of the Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care. They found that a single-payer system in Oregon would cost less money than our current system, while providing better service to more people. A single payer system would change much of the financing from premiums and out-of-pocket expenses at the time of care to a smaller amount, paid as you are earning money.

Imagine what that would be like. No healthcare bills. No confusing plans or restrictive networks. One quality plan for all of us, for our whole lives. Free to have the job we want, not just the job that provides health insurance.

All of us would be free to see our own doctors, and receive the best care for our family when we need it, not just when we can afford it. We won't have to put off seeing our doctor or dentist or therapist and risk getting sicker or in greater pain or less able to function in society. We will be free to get the care that our doctor or dentist or therapist recommends, without worrying about how are going to pay for it. We will have freedom from financial worries about getting healthcare, the freedom to be healthy.

To make this freedom a reality, we need to pass SB 704 with enough funding to do the careful planning necessary to design a single-payer healthcare financing system with a single risk pool and a single provider network for all Oregon residents. A system with enough transparency and public oversight to ensure that healthcare facilities are sited in locations most suitable to benefit the communities that need service, not where the most money can be made.

We can do this, and the freedom from worry alone will do a lot to help our health.

Charlie Swanson
Platform Committee Chair of the Democratic Party of Lane County