

Submitter: Connor Salisbury  
On Behalf Of: Occupy Medical  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB704

As a decade long volunteer for a free street clinic, lifelong Oregonian who had the privilege to live in some countries with universal healthcare, a survivor of a poverty household childhood in Coos Bay where we couldn't afford the doctor in the 'rent versus healthcare' equation living with the legacy of below 50% lung capacity due to repeated untreated childhood pneumonia, a small business owner, I urge you to actively support universal health care here in Oregon. The evidence that a single-payer system would both save money and improve outcomes continues to grow. The free street clinic I've been volunteering for for a decade, we have extensive data on savings of both lives and costs to local community, but depending on privileged volunteers able to keep such an endeavor afloat isn't the sustainable long-term solution, we'd like to be made obsolete by universal healthcare in Oregon.

Our own Eugene based Occupy Medical free clinic has traveled to various other cities, as well as rural areas in Oregon demonstrating zero-cost at point of need healthcare, and its benefits embraced by local residents and volunteers. Further we saw it wasn't a left or a right issue when i came to stories told to us in places like Roseburg or Cottage Grove of how universal healthcare would have helped prevent losing the family farm (to medical debt) versus a relative choosing to avoid cancer treatment. Our many doctor and nurse volunteers have collected research which has showed billion-dollar savings while extending comprehensive coverage to every resident of the state. Every. Single. Resident. I saw how this worked myself as an exchange student in the European Union, a clinic with just doctors and nurses in the small German town in which I lived and was a patient for my chronic lung damage developed in a three walled trailer in a sub \$5K/year family household on the Oregon coast, but no insurance billing staff or front half of the clinic devoted to billing, a part of the savings and efficiency gain right there.

During the pandemic, my small business and many others I'm sure were urged not to layoff, and took on debt (fell through the cracks on EIDL and PPP) - we're still paying the debt on much reduced income (our business was dependent on in-person conventions) and the lion's share of our debt was from keeping our employees insured until we had to layoff. The case for small-business benefiting from universal healthcare is also huge on its own as an economic stimulus, taking that burden off Main St business's backs from Portland to every corner of the state, particularly if it were done as elsewhere in the world, financed on a slightly higher tax on \*profit\* rather than the present flat fee model in the for profit/private system, where healthcare can be the straw that breaks the camel's back for a small business, or the rationale for large out-of-state corporations with the privilege of scale to game the

system, and reduce their average worker's hours to just below whatever threshold benefits become required - effectively freeloading those costs back onto Salem and our tax payers.

Thus Universal Health Plan would be a step toward not just healthier Oregonian individuals, but a healthier small business locally owned business ecosystem, and ultimately better balanced books in at the state level, with Salem no longer picking up the cost of poverty worker emergency care that the Walmarts & McDonald's of the ecosystem dodge.

Thank you for your consideration and time, ~Connor Salisbury, 10 year volunteer for Occupy Medical, proud Oregon Duck, & small business owner