

Submitter: Jana Starr  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB704

I oppose SB 704.

The presumption made by this bill and supporters is that having a Universal Health Care System managed by the State of Oregon, funded by tax payers is going to eliminate the high unsustainable costs of healthcare. State run healthcare does not make healthcare more affordable for the people.

This would at the very least effect the following:

1. Limit choice in healthcare coverage
2. Remove the market that drives insurers and healthcare providers to keep prices low
3. Increase taxes by employing yet more board employees at state wages and tax supported PERS pensions, paying every Oregonian's healthcare claims

What guarantee is there that a Universal Healthcare System managed by OHA is going to cover ramps for disability, expensive drugs for MS, Cancer or other diseases?

What guarantee is there that a Universal Healthcare System will cost less? The income taxes in the State of Oregon will increase so much to be unsustainable, driving Oregonians to be dependent on State assistance in all aspects of life. How is this providing any dignity or support for each Oregonian?

How has OHA demonstrated their ability to manage a pandemic in the last few years? OHA and the state of Oregon have not done anything but further the problem of hospital bed shortages, increased homelessness, increased drug and substance use, and lack of behavioral healthcare. Is Universal Healthcare managed by OHA and the State of Oregon truly a rational and reasonable solution with successful outcomes? To date - there is no evidence the State of Oregon or OHA could manage this successfully.

And what for those who would rather have private insurance? Are those Oregonians not allowed that choice? Forced to participate in a Universal Healthcare System in the State of Oregon?

OHP is a state run healthcare system, an example of what OHA and State run healthcare would look like - how successful has OHP been for those members? I haven't spoken to ONE OHP recipient who was happy with their healthcare (and yes, in my line of work I speak to MANY OHP recipients and advocate for their care). They have the same narrow network of providers, denied services, expensive drugs and non-covered ramps or mobility devices that any other healthcare recipient is receiving. In fact, often the network for OHP is NARROWER than private insured.

The best healthcare administered is by large companies who agree to pay the claims for their employees and pay for administrative services only from the insurer - these Oregonians are satisfied customers, and the healthier population of the State of Oregon.

What is the fiscal impact of this board developing Universal Healthcare? What will be the projected increase in Tax? How can any responsible legislature even suggest proposing changes that impact Oregon tax payers without even giving and ESTIMATE of what tax increases could be? Or that impact to the state?

Is insurance the real high cost driver for healthcare? What about the high costs of pharmaceuticals? OHP as a an example of a current state run healthcare service has not been able to negotiate those high price drugs lower. Why would it be any different in a Universal Healthcare plan?

I oppose this bill. This bill deceives many to think that State run universal healthcare managed by OHA would reduce the cost to Oregonian and deliver more services and medical choice to the individual - but in fact there is no promise of such benefits. Let Oregonians have choice to choose the health insurance they want. Don't force all Oregonians to pay for a Universal Healthcare system that won't be anymore efficient, or cost lowering. Stop the Pharmaceutical companies from charging exorbitant costs while donating huge donations to their favored politicians. Say no to Universal Healthcare. It won't help anyone.