

Submitter: Anna Steeves-Reece
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Dear Committee Members,

I'm writing in strong support of furthering our state's progress toward universal healthcare. From both professional and personal standpoints, I believe it is critical that the Universal Health Care Governance Board in SB 1089 (formerly SB 704) receive the needed funding to succeed. As a health services researcher with a PhD in public health, it is clear that universal healthcare is needed to create an affordable and equitable healthcare system to meet Oregon's constitutional obligation and Oregon's goal of health equity. As public health sciences tell us, each of us is healthier when our community is healthy. On a personal level, I directly experienced the unnecessary complexity and inefficiency of our current system while moving through my PhD program. From 2017-2022 I needed to change my health insurance four times due to shifts in my income and/or employment. This kind of instability is incredibly disruptive for continuity of care and access to preventive services. I have many friends who delay or avoid needed healthcare because they're worried about what their health insurance will or will not cover. Please fund the possibility of a state in which healthcare is a right versus a privilege. We have an incredible opportunity to improve our state's health, save money while doing so, and set an example for the country.

All my best,

Anna Steeves-Reece, PhD, MPH, MA