

Submitter: David Russo
On Behalf Of: Columbia Pain Management PC
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: HB4130

Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. David Russo. I have been a board-certified pain management physician in Oregon for over 17 years. I own and operate my medical practice with four locations while providing hands-on clinical care to patients. I receive at least two weekly solicitations from PE groups who want to acquire my practice, aggregate my patients, and consolidate my operations into their existing MSO schemes and structure.

When I meet with their representatives and unpack their offers, I always learn that these deals are bad for patients, local communities, and doctors. By controlling medical practice ownership and governance, outside investors, not doctors, determine what treatments should be offered to patients in a community. By choosing performance and operations metrics for a practice, investors, not doctors, decide which health plans to contract with, how many patients a clinician should see daily, and where they should be referred for other services. The intentions of the new bosses who run these clinics are not to improve the health and well-being of the community; they are to fatten the bottom line.

Strong disclosure requirements on the sale and governance of medical practices are vital for the informed consent of patients seeking medical treatment. Similarly, the heart of owning and controlling a medical practice is overseeing its daily operations, quality metrics, contracting, credentialing, evaluating, and implementing new treatments and modalities, and ensuring that the services offered to patients in their communities are appropriate for their needs.

This bill is vital for preserving the needs of patients within our local healthcare markets. HB 4130 does not limit the ability of investors, management companies, or those with other business-related experience to partner with independent physician groups, form Management Service Organizations (MSOs), or help caregivers develop new and innovative care delivery models and platforms. It simply ensures that medical decisions about patient care and the stewardship of vital local medical resources reside in the control of those licensed and credentialed to deploy them. This legislation provides ample time and ability for existing businesses to restructure their contracts and relationships so that everyone feels confident that patient care is placed at the center of enterprise activities.

Oregon must avoid the mistakes other states have made by abandoning strong

principles about the corporate practice of medicine. Without disclosure and enforcement of medical practice ownership regulations, unscrupulous profiteers will strip-mine our local healthcare markets and extract every bit of profit for their gain.

Support HB 4130 and send the message that the practice of medicine in Oregon is not for sale.

Sincerely,

David Russo, DO, MPH, MS
Board Certified Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Board Certified Pain Medicine
Board Certified Addiction Medicine

Columbia Pain Management, PC
Hood River, The Dalles, Tualatin, and Milwaukie, Oregon