

Dear Senate Committee on Health Care,

As a current Oregon medical student and native Oregonian, I am writing to express my strong support for SB 951, a critical piece of legislation that will protect the integrity of medical practice in Oregon by ensuring that physicians retain ultimate authority over decisions which impact patient care.

In 2025, when you tell people you want to be a doctor, their answer is: “don’t”. They cite the burden of paperwork, the lack of autonomy, the frustration of patients, and the extreme costs of education, liability, and running a practice. None of these things are heartening; there are a lot of much, much easier career options to choose from that would lead to better financial gain.

However, myself and my fellow medical students still chose to become doctors. My goal is to practice in Oregon, and **while I am so excited to serve Oregonians, I am already dreading finding (or creating) a job that will give me the autonomy necessary to use my medical expertise to its fullest.**

When I was working as a medical assistant in Bend, I witnessed one of our pediatricians quit. He was an excellent pediatrician; fancy training programs, great patient rapport, hardworking and efficient. But he wanted to cut down on his hours. He was seeing 20 patients a day in a fast paced pediatric clinic. There was no time for lunch, no time for bathroom breaks, and not enough time for patients. But he made the time, so he was always late. Fifteen minute appointment slots were not enough.

When he asked to cut down on hours, to work 40 hours a week (less than 1.0 FTE for a doctor), the company said no. He quit. But he had a non-compete. So he had to move out of the city, uprooting his family, for two years. Meanwhile, we were booking patients out over 9 months for a new patient visit with no new pediatrician in sight.

The company I worked at was owned by Walgreens, going by the company name of Village MD when they bought out Summit Health, the old BMC that was so cherished in the Bend community.

As I go through my training and choose where I want to settle down, **stories like his will deter me from returning to my community if living in Oregon means a loss of professional autonomy and the ability to see patients in an ethical manner**, with humane, common sense working conditions. Running a medical practice requires balancing financial sustainability with ethical patient care. This balance is the core of our healthcare system, preserved by the corporate practice of medicine doctrine that has existed in Oregon since 1947—a doctrine which more than 30 other states have also adopted.

Private equity firms and large corporate entities do not take the same oath that I do. They do not undergo the rigorous training required to make clinical decisions. They are not charged with balancing patient care and business interests. Yet, in the absence of strong protections like those proposed in SB 951, these entities are gaining increasing control over medical decisions. Loopholes in the existing doctrine have allowed outside entities to exert undue influence over clinical decision-making, effectively compromising the corporate practice of medicine doctrine which is still the law of the land in Oregon.

This is not a radical proposal. This bill does not ban private equity. It does not prohibit professional medical entities from contracting with Management Services Organizations for business and administrative support. It simply ensures that physicians retain ultimate authority over clinical matters—decisions that directly impact patient health and safety.

SB 951 is a necessary and reasonable step to close these loopholes and restore decision-making power to those who are trained, licensed, and ethically bound to care for patients. Oregon's physicians must be empowered to make medical decisions based on science, evidence, and individual patient needs—not financial incentives dictated by private equity firms.

I urge support of SB 951 as one of many important steps to protect the integrity of our healthcare system.

Sincerely,

Saylor Miller, MD Candidate 2028