



Testimony in Support of SB 539

Unite Oregon

Dear Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of SB 539**, which protects Oregonians from surprise hospital facility fees. I am Metzin Rodriguez and I represent Unite Oregon as their Health Equity Policy Lead Coordinator. An organization led by people of color, immigrants and refugees, rural communities, and people experiencing poverty in Oregon.

Today, I am representing our members across the state, more specifically, our frontline communities, which are often impacted by healthcare systemic changes. Now, more than ever, healthcare is becoming not only more expensive but also more threatened and should be protected even more. This is why our efforts include outreach within our communities through different languages to provide resources and opportunities for wealth-building to historically excluded communities, including healthcare resources and wellness.

Right now, Oregon families are forced to make hard choices between paying for medical care or other basic needs. In 2024, more than [three in four](#) Oregonians had a hard time affording healthcare services because of cost, leading them to delay or go without care completely. Unsurprisingly, Black, Hispanic, low-income communities, and women are the hardest hit. Additionally, [nearly half](#) of adults in Oregon say they would struggle to pay a \$1,500 medical bill.

Facility fees are extra charges for receiving services at hospital-owned facilities - including doctor's offices and clinics off the hospital's main property. These fees regularly exceed the cost of the care provided and often are not completely covered by insurance, turning simple, inexpensive procedures into major - and unexpected - financial setbacks for Oregon families. Oregon currently has no limits or standardization for how much a patient can be charged for a facility fee, meaning these unexpected fees can range between \$15 to even more \$1,500. Hospitals also make it difficult to understand why or when these fees are billed, making it next to impossible for Oregonians to predict or plan for these surprise health care costs.

We urge the committee to support SB 539 in order to protect people from hidden facility fees, putting Oregonians above hospital system profits. We hope you continue to be committed to protecting communities across the state and creating sustainable and trustworthy platforms to evolve with the current times. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Metzin Rodriguez
Health Equity Policy Lead Coordinator
Unite Oregon