



Oregon Latino Health Coalition

Health and wellness through equity and justice

March 22, 2025

Dear members of the Ways and Means Committee,

The Oregon Latino Health Coalition urges you to fully fund the Oregon Health Plan Medicaid budget, ensuring that the Healthier Oregon Program reaches its full potential. This investment is not just about fiscal policy; it's about the health and dignity of our communities. As we face potential federal budget cuts, it's crucial that we stay the course and protect Oregonians, not unelected billionaires. The Oregon Latino Health Coalition advocates for the health and well-being of our vibrant Latino community, which now constitutes the largest minority group in Oregon, with over 600,000 individuals calling this state home.

Medicaid funding plays a critical role in our community's health equity. Over 22% of those enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan identify as Latino or Latina, highlighting the importance of maintaining robust Medicaid support. The Healthier Oregon Program, established through House Bill 3352 in 2021, has been a beacon of hope for many by extending health coverage to all eligible Oregonians, regardless of immigration status.

However, our work is far from over. Language barriers and complex systems continue to hinder access to healthcare for many in our community. That's why the role of Oregon Health Plan Assisters is indispensable. These trusted liaisons bridge cultural and linguistic gaps, ensuring that our community members can navigate the healthcare system effectively.

We strongly urge to invest in the Healthier Oregon Program with the full recommended budget. This is not just a budgetary decision; it's a commitment to equity, justice, and the future of our state's diverse communities.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to the health of all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Olivia Quiroz, Executive Director