



**TO:** Chair Bowman, House Committee on Rules  
**FR:** Madison Walters, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555  
**RE:** **SUPPORT for HB 4147**

February 3, 2026

Chair Bowman, Vice Chairs Elmer and Pham, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 4147-1.

My name is Madison Walters, and I am a political liaison and member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, the largest private sector labor union in Oregon. We represent thousands of workers in the grocery and retail, manufacturing, and healthcare. We represent both medicaid providers and medicaid recipients, though we want to particularly emphasize the reliance our entire healthcare system has on federal medicaid and medicare subsidies to support a strong and resilient healthcare system for all Oregonians regardless of their individual coverage.

I cannot overstate the importance of access to health insurance- not just for our members, but for all working class Oregonians, and for anyone who has had to choose between seeking medical care and paying their rent. *Health coverage matters:* data shows that medicaid expansion leads to a higher likelihood of seeking care earlier and more often- this leads to lower mortality rates, lower costs, and improved health outcomes. Conversely, uninsured Americans are more likely to delay or forgo care, and face burdensome medical debt.<sup>1</sup>

We know that loss of coverage doesn't just impact individuals and their families, but will have a system-wide impact on our health network: due to federal policy changes to medicaid eligibility, Oregon's rural communities are expected to lose \$400 million dollars per year in federal health care funding during the next decade.<sup>2</sup> That's **\$4 billion dollars** over the next 10 years. This funding is what allows our rural hospitals and clinics to operate and

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<sup>1</sup> Key Facts about the Uninsured Population, [KFF](#)

<sup>2</sup> "Feds award Oregon \$197 million for rural health care as state grapples with billions in cuts," [Oregon Capital Chronicle](#)

provide essential services within our communities, so that patients are not forced to travel hours away to seek critical medical care.

With the federal government's implementation of work requirements to qualify for medicaid, it is critical that we maintain OHP coverage for as many qualified individuals as possible, and that we understand who is covered, and how. At this moment, we simply need more data so that the legislature can make informed and effective policy decisions that help achieve that goal.

This bill does not regulate employers, mandate benefits, or make any changes to the Oregon Health Plan. It simply directs OHA compile and present data that Oregon already collects and houses in various individual agencies, and compiles that data in a format that will help us understand the health coverage landscape through a labor market lens.

Cuts to Medicaid funding and reduction of services are not hypothetical issues, but very real decisions that policymakers must make within the next few years. HB 4147 arms policymakers with crucial data that will help them make those decisions with clarity and understanding. Thank you for your consideration, and we strongly urge an aye vote.

Sincerely,

Madison Walters

Political Liaison  
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555



**UNITED FOOD & COMMERCIAL WORKERS LOCAL 555**

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