

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-047

Resolution in Support of Legislative Action to Achieve Universal Health Care Access.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- A. It is impossible for an individual to live a productive, healthy life without access to quality health care.
- B. When all members of a community have equitable access to health care, the risk of illness from contagious disease decreases; absenteeism for both students and employees decreases; and the rate of financial hardships related to financing health-related treatment decreases.
- C. Our current healthcare system requires complex, costly, and time-consuming billing and administrative systems.
- D. Investments to address social determinants of health and other preventive measures will produce better health outcomes than administrative spending.
- E. Individual wellbeing and public health both benefit when all members of a community have real, meaningful access to health care: the risk of illness from contagious disease decreases; employee and student absenteeism decreases, which is positive for students, employees, and businesses alike; and individuals and families are less likely to experience financial vulnerability, bankruptcy, and homelessness.
- F. Our current healthcare system requires complex, costly, and time-consuming billing and administrative systems that greatly impact local government budgets.
- G. The never-ending rising costs of health care add challenges to our already strapped county budget and our small businesses, which keep our communities thriving.
- H. Oregon law (ORS 414.018) states, "It is the intention of the Legislative Assembly to achieve the goals of universal access to an adequate level of high quality health care at an affordable cost."

- I. The State of Oregon has an established recent history of working to improve health care access, evidenced by expanding Medicaid eligibility in 2014, and several other specific legislative actions such as, Oregon Senate Bill 558 ("Cover All Kids") which extended Oregon Health Plan coverage to all children in Oregon regardless of immigration status, and House Bill 3391 (Reproductive Health Equity Act) which extended coverage for the full range of reproductive health services to individuals who would otherwise be eligible for coverage if not for their immigration status.
- J. In 2016, the Oregon Health Authority contracted with RAND Corporation and Health Management Associates to complete the study outlined in HB 3260. The findings were reported in the 2017 session. The study recommended two promising options and confirmed that universal health care coverage in Oregon is achievable and financially viable, and could reduce health industry costs by streamlining multiple insurance and billing structures.
- K. In 2019 the Oregon Legislature established the Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care to recommend the design of the Health Care for All Oregon Plan, a universal health care system, administered by the Health Care for All Oregon Board, that is equitable, affordable and comprehensive, provides high-quality health care and is publicly funded and available to every individual residing in Oregon has convened to develop its recommendations.
- L. In December of 2020, the Congressional Budget Office released a report that examined the cost of universal healthcare proposals based on a Medicare fee-for-service program, and found that implementing a single payer healthcare program would not only guarantee coverage for everyone but it would also reduce spending nationwide.
- M. In the 2021 Oregon legislative session, Senate Joint Resolution 12, also known as the HOPE Amendment, passed as a referral to voters to declare healthcare access as a fundamental right in the Oregon Constitution.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:

- 1. To thank the Oregon Legislature for its work toward universal health care for all Oregonians, including creating a task force charged with recommending a universal single payer health care system that offers equitable, affordable, comprehensive, high quality, publicly funded health care to all Oregon residents.

2. To strongly urge the Governor to request the federal waivers to allow Oregon to receive the federal dollars for its own state-based single payer universal healthcare system.
3. To strongly urge the Oregon Legislature pass, and the Governor sign a bill, that creates a publicly funded, comprehensive, equitable, and high quality universal single payer system of health care that is accessible to all – without discrimination and that is affordable for all.
4. To strongly urge Congress to pass, and the President sign, a bill that will create a publicly funded, universal single payer healthcare system that is comprehensive, equitable, affordable, accessible, and of high quality.

ADOPTED this 19th day of May, 2022.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Deborah Kafoury, Chair

REVIEWED:
JENNY M. MADKOUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By _____
Jenny M. Madkour, County Attorney

SUBMITTED BY: Commissioners Sharon Meieran & Susheela Jayapal