



# PRESS RELEASE

## OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

---

For Immediate Release  
June 25, 2021

For more information, Contact:  
Hannah Kurowski:  
Hannah.Kurowski@oregonlegislature.gov

## House Passes Bill to Provide Health Care to Essential Long-Term Care Workers

*Senate Bill 800 allows long-term care workers to offer health insurance to long-term care workforce. The bill now heads to the Governor's desk*

SALEM, OR – The Oregon House voted today to pass [Senate Bill 800](#), a bill that will allow long-term care workers to access health insurance. One study showed that 13% of the long-term care workforce in Oregon is uninsured, compared to the statewide rate of just 5%.

SB 800 creates a trust that will be funded with state and federal dollars, as well as employer contributions. That trust will serve to fund health insurance plans for those who work in long-term care, or with individuals with developmental disabilities.

“Although these workers are taking care of our loved ones, too many of these workers do not have access to their own affordable health insurance,” said [Rep. Rachel Prusak](#) (D-West Linn), who carried the Senate Bill 800 on the House floor. “These benefits are overdue for Oregon’s long-term care workers. Last year’s COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how essential these jobs are, and SB 800 offers benefits that will help Oregon retain quality workers”

More than 64,000 Oregonians currently receive long-term care services and supports in licensed facilities or in their homes. By 2025, there will be a 15% growth in the number of Oregonians who are 85 years of age or older, that will add to the need for these vital services and this necessary workforce. When workers have the benefits and care they need, they are more likely to stay on the job and become more experienced and even more skilled in the care they provide to Oregonians across the state.

“When these essential workers are able to access health care, they not only protect their own health, they also protect the health of those they care for,” said [Sen. Deb Patterson](#) (D-Salem) who chairs the Senate Committee on Health Care. “Everyone deserves access to affordable health care. Senate Bill 800 is a needed step toward covering some of our most critical and committed front line workers in Oregon.”

Senate Bill 800 passed off the Senate Floor yesterday on a vote of 19-9.

“Long-term care staff are among our most essential workers,” said House [Speaker Tina Kotek](#) (D-North Portland). The pandemic put a spotlight on the immense challenges these workers face. It’s clear they need access to more affordable health care. I hope funding for this program will improve recruitment and retention by providing more support for those who support our most vulnerable.”

SB 800 passed 53-3 and now moves to the Governor’s desk.

###