



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

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Health Care as a Right Referral Passes Oregon House *Asks voters to add constitutional amendment*

SALEM, Ore. – Oregon House Democrats passed [House Joint Resolution 202](#) today, a constitutional referral that would ask voters in Nov. 2020 to enshrine health care as a fundamental right.

The legislation has long been a priority for Rep. Mitch Greenlick (D-Portland).

“This referral is about affirming, once and for all, our commitment to ensuring health care is a fundamental right for all,” Rep. Greenlick said. “Oregon has made significant progress in the last couple of decades to decrease the number of people who are uninsured. We have to do more though to make sure we are removing barriers to access so that every person in our state is able to get the care they are entitled to. This referral is a step in the right direction.”

The Oregon House passed a similar measure in 2018.

HJR 202, the HOPE Amendment, proposes an amendment to Oregon Constitution that would read: “It is the obligation of the state to ensure that every resident of Oregon has access to cost-effective, clinically appropriate and affordable health care as a fundamental right. The obligation of the state... must be balanced against the public interest in funding public schools and other essential public services, and any remedy arising from an action brought against the state to enforce the provisions of this section may not interfere with the balance described in this subsection.”

Rep. Rob Nosse (D-Portland) carried the referral on the floor of the House.

“Our discussions remind us that a healthier Oregon is something we all want,” Rep. Nosse said. “A healthy Oregon is a value we share. In fact, it is a core value. I believe it is fundamental enough and important enough that it ought to be enumerated in our constitution as an individual right.”

Rep. Andrea Salinas, the chair of the House Committee on Health Care, lauded the work that has been done to reform and expand Medicaid and ensure every child in Oregon has access to health care.

“There is still more work to be done though,” Rep. Salinas said. “My colleagues and I will not rest until we ensure that every person in this state receives quality health care. This resolution will move us forward as we commit to a better future for all Oregonians.”

Oregon House Democrats have ensured nearly every Oregonian has access to health insurance. Now, they are working to improve quality and affordability, lower prescription drug prices, combat the opioid addiction epidemic, and improve access to mental health care and substance abuse treatment and recovery.

Joining Rep. Greenlick as a chief sponsor of the legislation is Sen. James Manning (D-Eugene). Sponsors of the legislations are Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn), Rep. Jeff Barker (D-Aloha), Rep. Brian Clem (D-Salem), Rep. Paul Evans (D-Monmouth and Independence), Rep. Julie Fahey (D-West Eugene and Junction City), Rep. David Gomberg (D-Otis), Rep. Chris Gorsek (D-Troutdale), Rep. Ken Helm (D-Beaverton), Rep. Diego Hernandez (D-Portland), Rep. Paul Holvey (D-Eugene), Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer (D-Portland), House Speaker Tina Kotek (D-Portland), Rep. Akasha Lawrence Spence (D-Portland), Rep. John Lively (D-Springfield), Rep. Pam Marsh (D-Ashland), Rep. Susan McLain (D-Forest Grove), Rep. Mark Meek (D-Oregon City), Rep. Tiffany Mitchell (D-Astoria), Rep. Nancy Nathanson (D-Eugene), Rep. Courtney Neron (D-Wilsonville), Rep. Nosse, Rep. Carla Piluso (D-Gresham), Rep. Karin Power (D-Milwaukie), Rep. Rachel Prusak (D-West Linn), Rep. Salinas, Rep. Tawna Sanchez (D-Portland), Rep. Sheri Schouten (D-Beaverton), Majority Leader Barbara Smith Warner (D-Portland), Rep. Janeen Sollman (D-Hillsboro), Rep. Marty Wilde (D-Eugene), Rep. Anna Williams (D-Hood River), Rep. Brad Witt (D-Clatskanie), Sen. Michael Dembrow (D-Portland), Sen. Floyd Prozanski (D-Eugene) and Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward (D-Portland).

The House Joint Resolution, which passed 36 to 21, now goes to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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