



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

For Immediate Release
Feb. 14, 2020

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Oregon House Advances Legislation to Remove Barriers to Health Care

Prevents Medicaid screening before individuals can access financial assistance

SALEM, Ore. – Legislation to remove barriers to access health care passed the Oregon House of Representatives today. [House Bill 4029](#) prohibits non-profit hospitals from requiring patients to apply for medical assistance before screening for or providing financial assistance.

“Recent federal rules have led to the concern that many low-income Oregonians who are seeking a pathway to citizenship will not seek the care to which they are legally entitled or through charity care, due to fear they will lose their pathway to citizenship,” said Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer (D-Portland), a member of the House Committee on Health Care. “People should not have to choose between healthcare and a pathway to citizenship.”

The legislation follows up on [House Bill 3076](#), passed in 2019, which required nonprofit hospitals and hospital systems to establish free or discounted care for individuals based on a patient's household income. The bill required hospitals to conduct eligibility screening to determine if patients qualify for their financial assistance policy.

“We have an obligation to ensure that every person has access to quality, affordable health care,” said Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn), a member of the House Committee on Health Care. “This fix to last year’s charity care bill will provide more certainty for immigrant communities and to individuals who otherwise legally qualify for services but through misunderstanding might worry that seeking health care would jeopardize themselves or a family member.”

Oregon House Democrats are committed to protecting the right to health care through policies that improve quality and affordability, lower prescription drug prices, and combat the opioid addiction epidemic, as well as improve access to mental health care and substance abuse treatment and recovery.

House Bill 4029 passed 42 to 10. It now goes to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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