



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Senate vote lifts health care provider tax over final legislative hurdle

HB 2216B supports thousands of jobs and expands access to health care for an additional 220,000 Oregonians

SALEM—The Oregon Senate today passed a bill to fund critical health care services for Oregonians by renewing existing assessments for hospitals and long term care facilities. House Bill 2216B, which passed the Senate on a bipartisan vote of 25-5, will leverage federal matching funds to deliver a total of \$2 billion in health care services.

“Today we take a huge step forward to balance our budget, provide health care to vulnerable Oregonians, and keep thousands of jobs statewide,” said Senator Alan Bates (D-Medford), who carried the bill on the Senate floor. “This vote is all about making an investment in the services we count on for healthy Oregonians and a healthy economy.”

The assessments contained in HB 2216B enjoy support from a broad coalition of hospitals, business associations, advocates for retirees and senior services, health care providers, and retirement communities. A recent economic study initiated by the Oregon Health Leadership Council found that every \$1 million provided in federal matching funds goes to support 13.7 jobs in Oregon, meaning that the total of matching funds from HB 2216 will support over tens of thousands of jobs statewide.

HB 2216B continues the existing 4.3 percent hospital assessment, and adds an additional one percent assessment. The two steps combined will generate approximately a 2-1 federal match, totaling over \$1.6 billion. Additionally, the Long Term Care Facility Assessment continuation is estimated to garner nearly \$400 million for the coming biennium.

“Passage of this bill marks a victory for Senate Democrats and for Oregon, making good on our pledge to expand access to health care to the most vulnerable Oregonians and strengthening our health care workforce statewide,” said Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland). “This bill provides health care to an additional 220,000 Oregonians while helping to bring down costs, making care more affordable for everyone.”

Both assessments have existed since 2003. Today’s vote renewed the hospital assessment until 2015 and the long term care assessment through 2020.

House Bill 2216B will now go to Governor John A. Kitzhaber for his signature.

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