

**Testimony  
Supporting**

**SB 631**

**The Health Care for ALL Oregon Act**

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## Summary of Testimony

1. Out of my professional and personal experience with our health care system, I have a passion for health care reform.
  - a. As a minister over 40 plus years, I have traversed our health care system with countless individuals and families.
  - b. As a husband I accompanied my late wife in her medical care journey
2. There should be no reason for anyone to not have the health care they need when the need it.
3. There should be no need for anyone to have their savings and/or assets threatened or lost simply because they required medical care.
4. SB 631 -- the Health Care for All Oregon Act -- seeks to enact a primary religious tenet found in most of the world's major religions.
  - a. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is the Christian statement.
  - b. Judaism - "What is hurtful to yourself do not to your fellow man."
  - c. Islam - "Do unto all men as you would they should unto you"
  - d. the Baha'i community - "Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee."
  - e. Buddhism - "Hurt not others with that which pains yourself. "
  - f. Confucianism - "what you do not yourself desire, do not put before others."
  - g. Hinduism - "Treat others, as thou wouldst thyself be treated."
  - h. Sikhism - "Treat others as thou wouldst be treated thyself."
5. So why do we... how can we... as a nation/state... continue to exclude many of our neighbors from the Health Care they need?
6. To continue, as we now do through our Health Care system, to systematically and intentionally ignore and abuse a significant segment of our citizenry, is, not only unfair,
  - a. it is inhumane.
  - b. It is unjust!
  - c. I'd even say it is immoral!
7. Therefore, I urge you to support SB 631 -- the Health Care for ALL Oregon Act.
  - a. "Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you!"

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairperson and members of the committee. My name is Tim Roach and I am a resident of Corvallis. I serve as Vice President of Mid-Valley Health Care Advocates in Corvallis and am a member of the Board of Health Care for ALL Oregon, representing faith communities. It is my privilege to address you in support of SB 631 -- the Health Care for All Oregon Act.

I am an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church USA. During my over 40 years of active ministry, I served congregations in North Carolina, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Thus it has been my professional responsibility and personal honor to journey into our nation's health care system with a pretty fair number of individuals and families: sitting by countless bedsides, holding the hands of patients -- and their loved ones -- as the valiant struggle for health and, even, life itself occurred while prayers for healing, as well as for strength and consolation were raised. Through it all, you could say that I developed an empathy for those caught in the clutches of our country's health care system.

That empathy became a personal passion in 2013, after I spent 4 consecutive months in the stem cell transplant ward at OHSU with my wife, as she battled... and ultimately succumbed... to a blood disorder -- Myelodysplastic Syndrome.

Personally, my hope is that no individual, no family, no household will ever have to go through the trauma of a health care calamity. Yet, as we all know, illness and death are all part and parcel of this journey we call life.

But, as many of us here today also know -- there is absolutely no need for anyone -- any patient, any household, or any family -- to not have the health care they need - when they need it. Nor should anyone have their financial well-being threatened or lost, simply because they've had the misfortune to become ill and need health care.

So I address you on behalf of Health Care for ALL Oregon and in support of SB 631 -- the Health Care for ALL Oregon Act.

You see, ours is a movement... a calling... and SB 631 is legislation which strives to enact one of the primary religious tenets affirmed by the major faiths of the world.

In Christianity, we refer to this teaching as "The Golden Rule" --

Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you!

Matthew 7:12, Luke 6:31

In Judaism, this lesson is stated:

What is hurtful to yourself do not to your fellow man.

Judaism in the Talmud, Shabbat 31a

Islam proclaims the instruction:

Do unto all men as you would they should unto you,  
Islam in Mishkat-el-Masabih

The Baha'i community is challenged to...

Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee.  
Bahá'í Bahá'ulláh

Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, and Sikhism also have their own form of this religious counsel:

Buddhism - "Hurt not others with that which pains yourself. "

Confucianism - "what you do not yourself desire, do not put before others."

Hinduism - "Treat others, as thou wouldst thyself be treated."

Sikhism - "Treat others as thou wouldst be treated thyself."

With this universal religious teaching in mind, it occurs to me that I know of no one who does not want the health care they need, when they need it... either for themselves or for those they love.

So why do we... as people of moral faith and conviction... how can we... as a nation/state... continue to exclude many of our neighbors from the Health Care they need?

While millions in our country & state now have Health Care thanks to the Affordable Care Act, there are many, many more (over 30 million nationally, according to the Congressional Budget Office estimates<sup>1</sup>, including about 337,000 in Oregon<sup>2</sup>...) who will not have Health Care, even when ObamaCare is fully implemented. And there are -- additionally -- millions more who... even though they have health insurance... continue to have their (and their families') financial well-being jeopardized and destroyed by the costly American Health Care system as we now know it.<sup>3</sup>

To continue, as we now do through our Health Care system, to systematically and intentionally ignore and abuse this significant segment of our citizenry, is, not only unfair, it is inhumane. It is unjust! I'd even say it is immoral!

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<sup>1</sup> Hollahan, J., Buettgens, M., Carroll, C., & Dorn, S., (2012) The Cost and Coverage Implications of the ACA Medicaid Expansion: National and State-by-State Analysis. The Urban Institute for the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. November 2012. See <http://kaiserfamilyfoundation.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/8384.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Congressional Budget Office. (2013). CBO's Estimate of the Net Budgetary Impact of the Affordable Care Act's health Insurance Coverage Provisions Has Not Changed Much Over Time. See <http://www.cbo.gov/publication/44176>.

<sup>3</sup> Himmelstein, D.U., Thorne, D., Warren, E., and Woolhandler, S. (2009) Medical bankruptcy in the U.S., 2007: results of a national study. The American Journal of Medicine, 122(8), 741-746.

This is the moral and faithful motivation for me to be before you this afternoon... to address you on behalf of Health Care for ALL Oregon and urge your support of SB 631 -- the Health Care for ALL Oregon Plan.

"Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you!"

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you. I would be happy to respond to questions, if there are any.