

# **An Oregon Nurses' Guide: Meeting with Your Legislator or Legislative Candidate Health Care Financing Policy**

## **Goals:**

- **Build a relationship with legislator or candidate**
- **Begin to assess their view on health care financing and single payer**
- **Let them know your position on health care finance reform/single payer**

## **Arrange the meeting:**

- As you proceed, remember these are citizen legislators and you are a citizen.
- Find your legislator/legislative candidates and contact info:  
Find Your Legislator:  
<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/findyourlegislator/leg-districts.html>  
Candidates for open seats: (COMING SOON)
- Find out where and when legislator/candidate is available in district, and contact them.
- Identify yourself as a constituent and a nurse concerned about health care and/or public health policies. Request and schedule appointment to meet at office or agreed on community location.
- Ask how much time is available. Request 30-45 minutes.

## **Develop your meeting plan:**

- This is an initial meeting to listen, assess, and inform, but not to convince.
- All you need is YOU, but it is even better if 2-3 nurses go together
- Designate someone to take notes.
- Prepare a brief summary of why you care about health care and health care financing and its impact on nursing care and patients, including a personal story. Sign it with your credentials.
- Have written materials available supporting the Single Payer approach to leave with them. You might want to include:
  - Written personal case and your contact information
  - Health Care for All – Oregon (HCAO) handout <http://www.hcao.org>
  - Summary of Oregon HB 2828, health care finance study bill
  - Summary of Oregon SB 631, the single payer bill introduced in 2015
  - Article by Steven Brill <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/01/05/375024427/americas-bitter-pill-makes-case-for-why-health-care-law-wont-work>
  - Nurses for Single Payer handout

## **Have the conversation with the legislator/candidate:**

### **Introduction Phase**

- **Briefly** introduce yourself and others in the party
- Explain the purpose of your meeting: as a constituent and a nurse, you are concerned about health care and/or public health policies, and how those policies impact your ability to provide care and/or the ability of your patients to get the care they need.
- Verify how much time is available

- During the meeting, look for any personal connections or common interests.
- Advise that you are taking notes, and that you have materials to leave with them.
- **Briefly** tell your personal story with **short review** of your written summary

### Assessment Phase

- **Let the legislator/candidate talk and tell own personal stories about health care. (Be aware of rambling conversation).**
- **Acknowledge that these stories are so true and frequent but we want to take a look at the bigger picture.**
- **Focus on asking questions**
- **Listen to the legislator's/candidate's current perspective on the health care system.**  
Example: “I/we have come to get your perspective on the current health care system. What do you think is working and what is not?”
- What are the person's thoughts about costs for health care?
- What paths, if any, do they foresee in containing costs while giving patients the care needed?
- How do they view preventive care and public health in this area?
- Is the person aware of the Study Bill? If aware of the Study Bill, what thoughts if any do they have about the Bill and plan for evaluating financing?
- If conversation takes you there, what do they think about a Single Payer System? **(Facts and statistics are not as important at this point as building relationship and understanding how the legislator/candidate thinks.)**
- What are we doing? Getting nurses to think about this, and involved statewide in organizing for universal health care, thru Health Care for All Oregon (hcao.org) and Nurses for Single Payer (www.nursesforsinglepayer.org)
- Offer materials you brought.
- Let them know that you believe that Single Payer is the right way to go.
- If they are inclined to support Single Payer, ask how they see this coming about in Oregon. (Legislation, Legislative Referral to voters, or Ballot Initiative.)
- What role would they play in the legislature to help achieve this?
- Ask if there are any questions. If you do not know the answer, say so and offer to find the answer and get back to them.
- If you like what you heard, consider supporting the person in the run for office and say so.
- Thank the person for the meeting.

### After the meeting with the legislator

- Write a hand written thank you note signed by all at the meeting.
- Keep a record of what was said at the meeting, especially noting any commitments the legislator/candidate made in the meeting.
- If there were requests for more information, make sure to follow up. Contact [info@nursesforsinglepayer.org](mailto:info@nursesforsinglepayer.org) for help.
- Report your meeting findings to [info@nursesforsinglepayer.org](mailto:info@nursesforsinglepayer.org)