

Info for Legislative Constituent Contact Teams Regarding 2017 Bills

6/27/2017 version

Most important committee for most bills – Joint Ways and Means. Member list at <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Committees/JWM/Overview>. Click on member name to find contact information.

The human services subcommittee of Joint Ways and Means is especially important. See <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Committees/JWMHS/Overview>

In general, if you are talking with a Republican legislator, the most important thing to lobby for is increased revenue. Of the revenue issues, the highest priority is the healthcare industry tax increase, which is necessary to get federal matching money. If you know your legislator supports a bill of interest, thank them for doing so.

Bills and revenue of interest to HCAO

CCO reform – HB 2122, in Joint Ways and Means. Senators need an extra push.

The bill is intended to make CCOs more transparent and accountable. They must publicly file governing meeting minutes, they must be non-profits or benefit corporations by the contracting cycle after the one coming up now (by 2023), and OHA will create rules to help protect the public money (HCAO will need to be active in this process).

Message: These CCO reforms will likely be critical for our future plans. CCOs currently serve 25% of Oregonians and will need to be effective community organizations. Although the bill is weaker than what we wanted, it is still a useful reform and needs the support of our legislators. We cannot allow CCOs to misuse public money as profligately as some already have.

Health Care industry tax increase – this has now passed both house and senate as HB 2391

This revenue increase should provide sufficient funds so that Oregon will not have to cut people off of the Oregon Health Plan in the next biennium, unless the federal government passes a bill that decreases Medicaid funding before 2019. It also has sufficient revenue to fund Cover All Kids (see next item)

Message: Every Democratic legislator, as well as Republican Rep. Esquivel and Sens. Ferrioli, Girod, and Winters voted for this. It required at least one Republican in each house since it raises revenue. If your legislator voted for it, thank them.

Cover All Kids – SB 558 (part of Fair Shot /HEA agenda). In Joint Ways and Means Human Services subcommittee, with a public hearing on June 28 at 8:30.

Developed by the Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA), of which HCAO is a member, these matching bills extend coverage to all Oregon residents under 19 whose family income is below 300% of federal poverty level (FPL). It is expected to cover an additional 18,000 children and cost \$55 million.

Message: HCAO is a coalition partner advocating for this important move towards universal coverage. This bill should be fine since the health care industry tax increase has passed (see above) and it has Republican sponsors in both the house and senate. It is still worthwhile to mention your support, especially if your legislator is on the human services subcommittee of Joint Ways and Means.

Drug Pricing Bill – HB 2387, in Joint Ways and Means.

This bill grew from the interim drug pricing work group and has portions from the Senate Committee on Health Care. It has proposals that are sufficiently likely to result in system savings for prescription drugs that big PhRMA has taken out multiple full page ads in major Oregon newspapers touting it as a give-away to insurance companies. The bill also has provisions to lower consumer costs of very expensive prescription drugs, to require PhRMA to explain the underlying reasons for new drugs costing more than \$10,000 per year, the reasoning for a cost increase above 3.4% in a year, and some transparency regarding patient assistance programs.

Message: The bill is a comprehensive attempt to deal with drug pricing at a state level, and is innovative enough to be getting national attention. It is especially important to push senators to support it – emphasize that it has been amended to include provisions suggested by the Senate Committee on Health Care.

Public Health Emergency Coverage – HB 3276, in Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services. A work session is scheduled for June 27.

HB 3276 requires health benefit plan coverage of health services necessary to combat public health emergencies.

Message: Urge legislature support for this bill.

Reproductive Health Equity Act – HB 3391 (Fair Shot/OHEA agenda), in Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services. A public hearing is scheduled for June 28.

This bill requires health benefit plan coverage of specified health care services, drugs, devices, products and procedures related to reproductive health, while allowing exemption for plans sold to religious employers. It requires Oregon Health Authority to implement program to reimburse costs of services, drugs, devices, products and procedures related to reproductive health provided to individuals who can become pregnant and who would be eligible for medical assistance if not for certain federal requirements.

Message: Oregon needs step up to protect women’s health care with the current national climate.

Nonprofit Hospital Requirements – HB 2115, in House Committee on Revenue

The bill establishes some community benefit requirements for nonprofit hospitals. HCAO Action will push for stronger requirements than currently described in the bill, but does not yet have specific language.

Message: Oregon needs enforceable community benefit requirements for hospitals, and there is a general need for nonprofit to have real meaning when applied to healthcare providers.

Small Donor Funded Elections – HB 2578, In Joint Ways and Means

This bill is being promoted by Common Cause, who joined forces with HCAO in our April 20 lobbying effort. It provides a 6 to 1 publicly funded match for small donor contributions.

Message: Urge legislators to support this bill. This sort of match will help us elect more supportive representatives, with more time to legislate rather than fund raise.

Other Revenue – overall, increasing revenue is critical for Oregon. This is especially important to emphasize with any Republican legislator.