



OREGON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
TASK FORCE ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

January 27, 2021

TO: Members of the Task Force on Universal Health Care
FROM: Senator Manning, Representatives Hayden and Wilde

[Senate Bill 770](#) directs the Task Force to recommend “a universal health care system...that is equitable, affordable and comprehensive, provides high-quality health care and is publicly funded and available to every individual residing in Oregon.” Moreover, the bill highlights the importance of improving the health state of individuals and families, ensuring equitable access to care, and removing cost barriers. We share these common goals and values.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the state has and continues to grapple with responding to its unprecedented and challenging effects statewide. We recognize the pandemic has only magnified the existing health disparities within our communities and the structural problems within our health system. In response, in 2020, the Legislative Assembly held three special sessions and will continue to address the pandemic in the 81st legislative session. Our work has only begun.

For the past six months, the Task Force has been working in earnest to develop a detailed Health Care for All Oregon plan as directed by SB 770. This directive has required the work of multiple technical advisory groups and the Consumer Advisory Committee. We commend the Task Force for its progress and value each member’s commitment and contributions to this vital work. As legislators on the Task Force, we introduced [Senate Bill 428](#), seeking to extend the deadline to submit our report and recommendations to February 2022 due to the importance of your work.

We also recognize that today, too many Oregonians are experiencing overwhelming obstacles in trying to access equitable and affordable health care, and we need to do something to address that now. This has only been exacerbated by COVID-19.

We are therefore requesting the Task Force create a small work group, led by the Chair and Vice-chair, to identify intermediate strategies the legislature may consider to promote affordable universal coverage that will be consistent with and form a bridge to the Task Force’s long-term, overall plan. We ask the group to assess and prioritize policies in preparation for the 2022 legislative session: policies which Oregon lawmakers can act upon, are consistent with the goals of the Task Force, and continue to build on Oregon’s history of innovation. We ask the work group to include these policy options in the report that is to be prepared by the Task Force in June.

Senator James Manning Jr.—Senate District 7

Representative Cedric Hayden – House
District 7

Representative Marty Wilde – House
District 11