

Date Submitted: November 21, 2024

Public Comment Submission from: Samuel Metz

Organization: Oregon Physicians for a National Health Program

Topic: Single Payer Healthcare

Will oral comments be provided as well: No

Single payer healthcare for Oregon

Samuel Metz, MD

Oregon Physicians for a National Health Program

November 21st, 2024

Single payer goals:

- Access to care when needed
- Lower total healthcare costs to Oregonians
- Preserve or improve healthcare outcomes

In summary, “Better care to more people for less money.”

Creating better care to more people for less money leaves other problems unsolved (or leaves them for future legislative boards):

- Poverty and income disparity
- Profits in healthcare delivery
- Long term care
- Homelessness
- Reproductive rights or non-rights
- Unbalanced and inadequate work force
- Racism and racist outcomes
- Unhealthy lifestyles
- Unhealthy retail products (e.g. nicotine, beef)
- Transportation challenges for poor, bed-ridden, or immobile patients
- Geographic clinical deserts
- Culturally inappropriate care
- Fraudulent providers
- Medical errors and injuries

If this board designs a single payer system for Oregon, it will only provide better care to more people for less money. That’s a legacy you can be proud of.

Date Submitted: October 21, 2024
Public Comment Submission from: Tom Sincic
Organization: N/A
Topic: Public Meeting Law and Communications
Will oral comments be provided as well: Yes

To: UHPGB and Committees
From: Tom Sincic, MSN, FNP-Retired
Date: 10/21/2024

Re: Public Meetings Law and Unnecessary Restrictions

I am writing to reiterate that my understanding is that Attorney Jacob Gill is not authorized to give training on the public meetings law discussed on 10/17. The law specific states that only the Oregon Government Ethics Commission or its designee can provide this training. I recently confirmed that the OGEC had not authorized anyone else to provide the training. I believe this to still be true.

“(Training on public meetings law)

SECTION 3. (1)(a) The Oregon Government Ethics Commission shall annually prepare training on the requirements of ORS 192.610 to 192.690 and best practices to enhance compliance with those requirements. **The commission may delegate the preparation and presentation of trainings to another organization, except that the commission must approve the content of training prepared by another organization prior to presentation of the training.**

(b) At the discretion of the commission, trainings prepared under this section may be presented in live sessions or be made available for viewing online. Training sessions may be presented to multiple governing bodies at any one time and may be presented in a pre-recorded format.”

In addition, an executive session to hear from counsel on this matter is outside of what is allowed for executive sessions: “(h) To consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.” The public needs to hear what counsel says. Also, “(6) No executive session may be held for the purpose of taking any final action or making any final decision.” It is likely that the board would be having some sort of deliberation. This does not fall into the exempt areas listed.

The Board needs to look at what the OGEC has put in writing to Senator Dembrow that I provided to the Chairs and E.D. (See below.) I strongly recommend that the board and its committees get training as a group from the OGEC.

“From: MYERS Susan * OGEC <Susan.MYERS@ogec.oregon.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 10:09 AM
To: Sen Dembrow <Sen.MichaelDembrow@oregonlegislature.gov>
Subject: Oregon Government Ethics Commission

Senator Dembrow –

I wanted to reach out to you personally regarding the Oregon Government Ethics Commission and the administrative rules for Public Meetings Law, which were adopted by the Commission at its meeting on September 20th. Mainly I wanted to reassure you that the Commission did carefully consider the comments you submitted regarding the prohibition on serial communications.

As you note, HB 2805 and the existing case law (*Handy* case) provide that serial communications among a quorum of the members of the governing body on matters subject to the governing body's decision or deliberation are prohibited. **The Rule that was adopted, OAR 199-050-0020, does not prohibit communications among less than a quorum of the governing body. Rather, it simply clarifies the statutory prohibition.** It states:

A quorum of the members of a governing body shall not, outside of a meeting conducted in compliance with the Public Meetings Law, use a series of communications of any kind, directly or through intermediaries, for the purpose of deliberating or deciding on any matter that is within the jurisdiction of the governing body.

I would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have concerning this rule or any of the other rules that were adopted by the Commission.

Susan V. Myers

Executive Director

Oregon Government Ethics Commission

susan.myers@ogec.oregon.gov

(503) 378-6808"

This is a matter of urgency as the current discussions have created confusion with a negative impact on those who are generously volunteering to do this important work.

Date Submitted: October 21, 2024
Public Comment Submission from: Tom Sincic
Organization: N/A
Topic: Focus of Work and Concerns about Consultants
Will oral comments be provided as well: Yes

To: UHPGB
From: Tom Sincic, MSN, FNP-Retired
Date: 10/21/2024

I am writing to bring forward a needed emphasis on the continued work of the UHPGB.

The UHPGB adopted its fantastic Values and Principles. During the meeting on 10/17 neither of the presenters gave mention to those. In fact, they gave opinions about difficulty in achieving rather than focusing on how to achieve. Everyone knows the path is challenging. Consultants/presenters preaching about difficulty is inappropriate. The presenters lack of enthusiasm was palpable. In addition, there has been no mention of the constitutional right that those in Oregon now enjoy. The UHPGB is the pathway to making it realized. This includes the only path to addressing access, affordability and Oregon's 2030 goal of health equity.

In the last two weeks, I have personally presented to or had discussion with the following:

- Presentation and discussion with a union board and union membership
- Providers at a psychotherapy practice
- Attendees at the Oregon Public Health Association Conference
- Discussions with individual small business owners
- Multiple interactions at a nonprofit networking event
- Multiple interactions with students at the PSU Career Fair
- Many interactions in community spaces with individuals including foreigners
- **Coming up presentation to nurse midwives**

It was clear that across the spectrum those I interacted with are intolerant of the inequitable and costly current insurance based system. Common descriptions were "disgusting", "a scam," and "immoral". On the other hand, they and are enthusiastic about the change to a universal healthcare system based on the values you have adopted. (See below for enthusiasm.) Multiple provider groups have already signed on in support of this effort as they are tired of the stress and burnout.

While the public communications committee's work is the necessary framework for getting ideas and feedback, the UHPGB and its committees are not the advocacy group for moving forward the proposal through the legislative process. It is not part of the legislative charge. The UHPGB and all the steps leading to this point are because of community advocacy and so shall it continue to be the way forward to success.

Recommending a change in timeline should not/must not be a part of the board's work. This can come through discussion in the 2027 legislative session after the board submits its report. The board needs to move forward with a mindset of achievability and any consultants should only be participating with that framework.

As an additional note, it was mentioned about an ERISA presentation is on the agenda and perhaps it is time to add a beyond academic presentation at that time. Do you know that you have a volunteer, Jim McGee, on the Plan Design and Expenditures Committee who is an on the ground ERISA expert, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jameslmcgee/>. Invite Jim.

With Gratitude for Your Dedication



Date Submitted: November 18, 2024

Public Comment Submission from: Richard Gibson

Organization: Member, Finance and Revenue Committee

Topic: Committee member communication

Will oral comments be provided as well: No

I am a member of the Finance and Revenue Committee. One of the important functions of the committee is to ensure that we have a proper accounting of the money currently spent on Oregon health care, so that we can be sure that the revenue plan ultimately decided by the Governing Board will be sufficient. There are various sources of information on Oregon health care spending including OHA, the RAND Corporation, the CBIZ Optumas report presented to the Task Force, the federal National Health Expenditure Accounts (NHEA), and others. As committee members consider the differences among these accounting sources, we need to probe each other's understanding of what we read. Do these sources agree with each other? Do they categorize spending in different but reconcilable ways? How do the categories overlap? What is missing from each source's accounting of Oregon spending? Where do we need outside expertise? Careful consideration requires iterative discussion and back and forth among committee members. It can't be done only in one monthly three-hour meeting with a prescribed agenda. That would be like telling the contractor building your house that he or she can only communicate with the subcontractors once a month. Either the house won't be constructed optimally, or it will take way longer than expected. I request that the Governing Board seek permission for committee members to discuss findings between formal committee meetings. If committee members email each other, then the committee chair with a UHPGB email address could be copied on each email for later posting on a public website. If a verbal conversation occurs, the Zoom transcript could be posted on a public website. We could ask committee members to use a public website discussion board on which the public could follow along. There are options for balancing effectiveness with transparency. Oregonians need to have confidence in the ultimate Universal Health Plan, which will be hugely complex and expensive. That plan cannot be built without careful deliberation by committee members. I am not asking for policy decisions to be made by a small group of people in a back room. Policy decisions need to be made at scheduled public meetings. I am asking for a way to discuss important information details as long as needed with full public transparency. Oregonians expect no less.

Date Submitted: November 15, 2024

Public Comment Submission from: Mike Huntington MD

Organization: N/A

Topic: Public Meeting Law and Communications

Will oral comments be provided as well: No

To: UHPGB and Committees From: Mike Huntington MD-Retired

Date: 11/21/2024

The Oregon Universal Health Plan Governance Board has an overly restrictive policy on member-to-member communication. The policy should be modified to comply with the guidelines of the Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGEC).

The OGEC is solely authorized to provide or approve public meeting law training, as mandated by state law. The OGEC may delegate training preparation and presentation to other organizations, but the content must be approved beforehand. Currently, it appears the OGEC has not authorized any other entities to conduct this training.[1](#)

Consulting with counsel about legal rights and duties is only permitted for current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.[7](#)

In a letter to Senator Dembrow on September 24, 2024, Susan V. Myers Executive Director Oregon Government Ethics Commission stated that OAR 199-050-0020, does not prohibit communications among less than a quorum of the governing body.

It appears that the current Board policy on member-to-member communication does not adhere to the OGEC guidelines. Please obtain OGEC official guidance and training for the Board and its committees. Accordingly, please change Board policy on member-to-member communication. Such training and policy update will allow the much-needed freedom of Board members to communicate with one another while simultaneously honoring quorum restrictions.