

Health LLC, which gave \$100,000, and Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, which contributed \$90,000, as *Eugene Weekly* reported previously.

The Stop Healthcare Taxes PAC, leading the no vote, has received contributions from various Republican party groups and large contributions from individuals such as Brian Maguire II and Andrew Miller and the All 36 PAC, controlled by Republican Rep. Cedric Hayden, a major influence behind the push to put 101 on the ballot.

More than 160 organizations in Oregon support Yes on 101, according to the Yes for Healthcare campaign. A cursory look at the Voters' Pamphlet shows a slew of nurses, doctors, health care advocates, hospitals and educators supporting the measure.

In Lane County, Yes on 101 is supported by the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), Our Revolution Lane County, Indivisible Eugene, the National Organization for Women, the Democratic Party of Lane County and Health Care for All Oregon.

"We can trust that these dollars are going into health care in Oregon," Fahey said. "In some cases it's up to \$16 [in Federal matching] for every dollar of funding through this approach, and then that funding is returned to Oregon and is completely earmarked for health care."

Several citizens came forward with their personal stories about Medicaid in support of Measure 101 at the Jan. 4 town hall. Susan Bliven, a Eugene resident, said, "Without Medicaid, I would die." She said she had a tumor strangling her spinal cord, and once she became too sick to work. "We went from a solidly middle class family making \$100,000 a year to living on Lee's [Social Security disability insurance]," she said of her husband.

"Access to Medicaid keeps my family from having to decide between paying for food, housing and other necessities or life-giving medical care," she concluded, tearing up.

The chair of the local DSA chapter, Jen McKinney, shared her own story. Her daughter Beatrix was born at 29 weeks, weighing only 2 pounds, due to McKinney's complications from an infection during pregnancy. She had to take 6 weeks off from work to care for her young daughter.

"We had to stay home because she was immune compromised," McKinney said at the town hall. "There's nothing wrong with her today. But her entire life she will have a pre-existing condition because she was born early because of something that happened to me."

"That is not her fault. She should never be denied health care because of something that was not her fault."

"We were on OHP and that was the only thing that saved us," she added. McKinney says Measure 101 has to pass or she will lose her health insurance. "We don't need slick brochures to tell us to care about our fellow citizens. It's very, very telling that they need that" on the opposition side, she said.

But other citizens raised concerns regarding the measure. Charlie Hibberd stood up at the town hall to say he's paying \$16,500 a year for health insurance he can't even use because of the high deductibles.

"I'm never going to be able to use my health insurance or I'll never be able to go to the doctor unless I have a catastrophic problem, and it's costing me \$16,500 a year, with the high deductible. Now you tell me these insurance companies aren't going to add those costs on to my health plan sooner or later?" Hibberd asked.

Fahey responded, "There is no doubt that the way we structure health care in this country is not working. It's broken."

She added that Measure 101 does include a stipulation that insurers can raise prices by no more than 1.5 percent to cope with the 1.5 percent assessment, but she says it will keep costs 6 percent lower for individuals buying their own insurance due to the reinsurance program in Measure 101

that stabilizes health insurance premiums by spreading the cost of high-risk buyers between all the companies.

Parrish takes issue with this view, saying that the reinsurance program, which helps insurance companies "offset the costs of high-risk patients," helps only the 200,000 people or so in the individual markets (in addition to the one million or so on Medicaid), not college students or small businesses.

The Voters' Pamphlet includes arguments in favor from Disability Rights Oregon, 41 community hospitals across the state, numerous Latino groups, Oregon Pediatricians, Women's groups, including Planned Parenthood, and the Oregon Nurses Association. The arguments in opposition section includes 27 arguments, 16 of which are furnished by Parrish.


Parrish's main concern seems to be that Measure 101 is "unfair" and that it may overfund Medicaid. She suggests funding Medicaid with a proposed tobacco tax.

Parrish's largest campaign contributors in the past few years include Anheuser Busch — an out-of-state beverage company (\$25,000), Stimson Lumber Company (\$15,000), the Associated Oregon Industries PAC (\$25,000) and the Oregon Food Political Action Committee (\$10,000).

At the town hall in Junction City, one citizen named Rep. Parrish as one of her enemies. Mary Stewart addressed her concerns toward the senators and representatives petitioned for 101 but who weren't in the room. "What do they have against the elderly, the chronically sick, the unemployed, and what do they have against children?" she asked. "Why do they want to take a child who needs treatment and deny them insurance?"

Mary Stewart says her daughter contracted melanoma at age 26 and would have been stuck without insurance as a student if it weren't for OHP.


"If I lose her, I will guarantee that you will never, ever win an elected seat again," Stewart said of the legislators she blamed for 101, "because I will do everything I can to find a candidate and defeat you if I have to do it myself." ■



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