



A Change of Pace
Singer adapts to new hometown
 See Metro, page 9

Supreme Court Appointment
First African American to serve state's highest court
 See Local News, page 3



Portland Observer

Volume XLVII • Number 1



www.portlandobserver.com
 Wednesday • January 3, 2018



Established in 1970
 Committed to Cultural Diversity



PHOTO COURTESY YESFORHEALTHCARE.ORG.

Justine Kuunifa, a licensed nurse practitioner from Molalla, supports Measure 101 because of the impact it will have on the families and seniors he treats.

Healthcare on the Line

Measure would protect coverage for working poor

BY DANNY PETERSON
 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A wide coalition of health care advocates, including progressive and social justice organizations, are encouraging a yes vote in an upcoming special election

to fund a major slice of the Oregon Health Plan, the state's health insurance program serving low income residents.

Voters in the Jan. 23 vote-by-mail election will decide if new fees on hospitals, clinics and insurance companies will cover the costs of expanding Medicaid coverage for the working poor, as passed by the Oregon Legislature in 2017 but referred to voters.

Known as Measure 101, the proposal also specifies that insurance companies are

not allowed to increase customer premiums or their out-of-pocket costs by more than 1.5 percent as a way to prevent the added expenses to be passed on to patients.

The assessments would collect between \$210-\$320 million, officials said, which the federal government would match dollar-for-dollar. Without them, the Oregon economy would lose billions in federal funds and Oregon Health Plan enrollment would decline by more than one-third, making it difficult to maintain the infra-

structure of the state's coordinated health-care organizations, advocates say.

Proponents of the measure include a coalition of over 160 organizations called Yes for Healthcare, drawing support from a wide range of civil rights groups, including the Urban League of Portland, Basic Rights Oregon, Multnomah County Democrats, and Portland Resistance, the activist organization formed last year after the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4