

Sheila Alfsen
Chemeketa Community College sheila.alfsen@chemeketa.edu
Linn Benton Community College alfsens@linnbenton.edu
Portland State University alfsen2@pdx.edu

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To the committee addressing Senate Bill 196:

I'm writing in support of Senate Bill 196 to urge you to fund insurance benefits for adjunct professors at universities and community colleges in Oregon. Since Obama care came into being, many companies have fired and rehired employees as part-timers in order to avoid paying for their health insurance costs. In Oregon, the institutions of higher education have been doing this for years, their workers being adjuncts! It is well known that the bulk of the teaching in these institutions is done by adjuncts; well-educated people who are being denied by their employer a most basic need; the access to affordable health care.

My own experience bears this out. Years ago, I taught high school and had health care coverage through the school system. In order to teach my science specialty, I changed employment to the community college system. Right before Obama care came into effect, my husband lost his medical insurance that had been covering me since my employment change. We quickly looked around for a policy and found one, purchasing in November, 2013. The policy did not come into force until Dec 31st. On January 1, 2014, our policy (only in effect for one day) tripled in cost. A substantial sum of money entirely wasted!

In other states, the college system is not as unfair to its employees. In Washington, for example, adjuncts who work at multiple institutions have the chance to be partially insured at each, allowing the professor to have health care coverage. I have to work at multiple institutions in order to make a living wage. The need to provide health insurance for myself is a constant struggle. As professionals that have been entrusted with the responsibility to educate upcoming generations, adjunct professors in Oregon's institutions of higher learning deserve to be treated with more respect and equity.

Sincerely,

Sheila Alfsen