

Episcopal Diocese of Oregon

Report to the 135th Annual Meeting of Convention

October, 2023

WORKING GROUP ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

Contact: Pamela Lyons-Nelson 503.269.4756 3plnelson@gmail.com

Other Members: Marcia Kelley, Thea Sanchez, David Young, Pamela Lyons-Nelson

Activities Report

- Universal Health Care work was largely suspended during the pandemic, greatly disorganizing and reducing our work in many congregations. As churches struggle to redefine activities and commitments, we have found few places quite able to receive us yet; we are more than ready to begin whenever they are ready.
- In the meantime, we take this opportunity to diversify our group and create new pathways to support universal health care, for example, talking to medical personnel in the congregations about a more visible role in this work.
- As per the Diocesan resolution of November 2017 requirement, we re-upped our membership in Health Care for All Oregon.
- We spent most of our efforts tracking and attending hearings on SB1089, and giving in-person testimony on behalf of the Diocese to the Legislature This was highly successful, even with the walkouts, etc. In the end SB1089 was signed, establishing and funding a Governance Board, a 9-person group who will design a detailed single payer universal health care system to present to the state legislature. It follows on the heels of the original legislation to explore the intention to have universal health care (2019), the addition to our state constitution of health care as a human right (2021), and now the mandate to establish and fund the Governance Board (2023), sending it to the legislature in 2025 for implementation in 2026. At that point we hope to have crossed our goal line. We do anticipate opposition and are preparing for it.

2023 Goals Progress

Helped pass the formative bill for universal health care in Oregon

Re-upped our required membership in Health Care for All Oregon

Began discussions on recruiting new diverse members of our working group

2024 Goals

- We will continue our education and advocacy work on Universal Health Care
- We will monitor the formation of the Governance Board
- We will follow through on expansion of this working group

It is an honor and blessing to serve on this group to provide such an instrument of healing.