

4/2/07

Dear Representatives of the House Health Care Subcommittee on Health Policy,

We are writing to you as representatives of the Jefferson Regional Health Alliance (JRHA), in support of HB 3099. JRHA is a collaboration of regional community leaders from public and private sectors committed to improving the health of the citizens of southern Oregon. JRHA is composed of four hospital CEOs (one retired), the Chief of Staff of the Veteran's Regional Center and Clinics, the Directors of Health and Human Services from both Josephine and Jackson Counties, the Director of the Office of Medical Assistance Programs, a foundation director, the provost from Southern Oregon University and several physicians, business leaders and representatives. (Names are provided below.) The group has been meeting monthly since 2005. We are addressing a variety of issues including but not limited to: access to mental health services, a health care workforce shortage, improving chronic disease management and, most to the point here, improving dental care for southern Oregon's low income, uninsured and underinsured residents.

This last goal is critical to the health of our community and the health of all Oregonians. Lack of adequate dental care has disastrous consequences, ranging from the resulting reduction of employment potential, to the increased likelihood of drug and alcohol dependency that comes from self-medicating untreated dental pain. There are many, many other challenges that follow inadequate dental care and we know you are familiar with these them. We know too that you are also familiar with the myriad data and strong arguments in favor of fluoridation as well as the very few arguments, by now well-rebutted, that are opposed. We will not list these various arguments here, but instead refer you to all of the documents provided to you by the Oregon Dental Association.

The Jefferson Regional Health Alliance strongly supports HB 3039. Members of our group are available to talk further with you if you are willing as we implore you to pass this critical piece of health care legislation.

Sincerely,

*James R. Watson*  
*Jon Lange*

James R. Watson, Chair & Jon Lange, Facilitator,  
Jefferson Regional Health Alliance

### **The Jefferson Regional Health Alliance**

<b><i>Brennan</i></b>	Laura	PacificSource Health Plans
<b><i>Bryon</i></b>	Kathy	Gordon Elwood Foundation, Executive Director

<b><i>Collins</i></b>	Hank	Director of Jackson County Health & Human Services
<b><i>Douma</i></b>	Allen	DMAP, Administrator
<b><i>Forsyth</i></b>	John	Community Health Center, M.D.
<b><i>Hanenburg</i></b>	Tom	Providence Medical Center, CEO
<b><i>Hecox, MD</i></b>	Kerri	La Clinica del Valle
<b><i>Marchetti</i></b>	Mark	Ashland Community Hospital, CEO
<b><i>Mebane, MD</i></b>	Andrew	Chief of Staff, So. OR Rehab Center & Clinics, Dept. of Veterans' Administration
<b><i>Shepherd, MPH</i></b>	Belle	Director of Josephine County Public Health
<b><i>Potter</i></b>	Earl	Southern Oregon University, Provost
<b><i>Thorndike</i></b>	Bill	Medford Fabrication, President & CEO,
<b><i>Vinyard</i></b>	Roy	Asante Health System, CEO
<b><i>Watson</i></b>	Jim	<i>Hospital CEO, ret. JRHA Chair</i>
<b><i>Blankenship</i></b>	Marian	Department of Health and Human Services

***FACILITATOR:***

<b><i>Lange</i></b>	Jon	Professor, Southern Oregon University
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***ALTERNATES:***

<b><i>Graf</i></b>	Joe	Dean of Sciences, Southern Oregon University
<b><i>Herwig</i></b>	Brian J.	Providence Medical Center
<b><i>Kelly</i></b>	Scott	Asante Health System, Vice President

***Work Force Representative***

<b><i>Fong</i></b>	Jim	The Job Council, Executive Director
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