

Cover Oregon Board Thinking of Dissolving Cover Oregon

Last week Cover Oregon's board of directors had the fate of itself on a board meeting agenda. At the last minute, the board decided to postpone a vote on the subject.

If Cover Oregon is closed down its duties will be passed to the Oregon Health Authority and to the Oregon Insurance Division.

There is a lot of support on the board for dissolution but others are opposed. The reasons for dissolution include friction between the staffs of Cover Oregon and the Oregon Health Authority and the insurance division over who is doing what.

Supporters on the board say shutting it down means turning control over to the Oregon Health Authority who was in charge of the exchange's website development.

That's one of the big causes of the failure of Cover Oregon.

Oregon is transferring health insurance purchases to the federal government's HealthCare.gov site. What's left for Cover Oregon is the call center to help consumers with questions and its outreach effort.

No jobs will be lost — or at least the cost of those jobs — if Cover Oregon doesn't do them then either the Authority or the insurance division will.

Oregon Senate President Peter Courtney said he's going to introduce legislation in 2015 to dissolve Cover Oregon if the board fails to do so. "Enough is enough. Oregonians deserve better than Cover Oregon has delivered. The Legislature is accountable to Oregon and her people. Cover Oregon isn't and therefore must be abolished," Courtney said.

That may not be fast enough. If the Cover Oregon board fails to shut itself down there are those in the Oregon Legislature screaming for a special session to do it for them.

