

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed
Vote:	5 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Bates, Kruse, Morrisette, Morse, Monnes Anderson
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Robert Shook, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	4/16, 4/23

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Allows volunteer health practitioners who licensed in other states and registered with the volunteer health practitioner registration system to practice in Oregon during an emergency. Eliminate the need for a registry based on a current statute that established a registry for health care providers in 2003 (ORS 401-654). Clarifies liability of volunteer health practitioners, and allows the practitioners to receive benefits if injured during the emergency. Allows the Office of Emergency Management to adopt rules relating to volunteer health practitioners.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Registry of emergency health care providers
- Emergency responder liability and Oregon Tort Claim Act coverage
- Uniform Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioners Act
- Role of Office of Emergency Management, and Oregon Medical Board

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Eliminate the need for a registry based on a current statute that established a registry for health care providers in 2003 (ORS 401-654). Clarifies the legal liability issues for emergency providers, and supports the current statute that designates the Office of Emergency Management as the agency responsible for registering emergency health care responders.

BACKGROUND: As demonstrated during the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 and many other emergencies in the nation's history, volunteer health practitioners are essential to meeting surge capacity in public and private sectors. Underlying the successful deployment and use of volunteer health practitioners during emergencies is the need for a legal environment that supports their efforts. There are legal gaps and deficiencies that may hinder, rather than encourage, volunteer health practitioners' activities during emergencies.

Following Katrina, the U.S. Congress introduced the Uniformed Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioners Act, which provides for licensing reciprocity, relief from civil liability, and Workers' Compensation protections for "state forces" deployed to respond to emergencies. A critical element in responding to emergencies is having trained and qualified surgeons able to enter another state to provide the necessary care when the size and scope of the disaster is such that the local medical community is completely overwhelmed or severely incapacitated due to the disaster.

Senate Bill 8-A allows a volunteer health care practitioner to provide medical care in Oregon if the practitioner is registered with the volunteer health practitioner registration system.