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Statement in Opposition to HB 4010

John McCulley

House Health Care Committee

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Nurses practitioners have a very legitimate complaint in how they were treated by insurance companies when some experienced dramatically reduced reimbursement several years ago. Sadly a grievance against insurance companies has turned into an unfortunate battle between physicians and nurses.

Members of the Oregon Psychiatric Association agree that nurse practitioners were wronged but strongly disagree with the corrective action proposed in HB 4010 for the following reasons:

- In light of all the work being done in the area of health care transformation, including payment reform, it doesn't make sense to embed in state law payment for one part of the health care delivery system.
- The treatment provided by physicians in many cases is not the same as the care provided by nurse practitioners. The same billing code does not equate to the same level of expertise and time in treating the patient.
- Physician cost structures and level of accountability are higher and should be considered in reimbursement.
- The bill does not meet the Triple Aim of health care: 1) Improve the health of the population; 2) Enhance the patient experience of care (including quality, access, and reliability); and 3) Reduce, or at least control, the per capita cost of care.
- There is no guarantee HB 4010 will bring nurse practitioner reimbursement back to previous levels and there is possibility that the bill will produce lower reimbursement for everyone.
- This bill could discourage people from becoming physicians when the state legislature says the value of a lengthy education and training regimen is the same as one with significantly less training.
- The medical community has offered alternative solutions that directly respond to the issue and those amendments should be positively considered.

We urge the committee to consider amendments to HB 4010 that address the plight of those nurses whose reimbursements were cut without the far reaching impacts the bill may have as currently drafted.