



## **Testimony on the Oregon Health and Science University Budget**

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Co-Chairs Monroe and Komp and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the OHSU budget on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association.

State funding for nursing programs at OHSU and in our community colleges is critical in order to ensure that we develop the nursing workforce to meet our future health care needs. Currently, state funding makes up over 35 percent of the OHSU School of Nursing's budget. Student tuition accounts for 50 percent, and already places a significant financial burden on students.

The OHSU School of Nursing provides the baccalaureate degree for the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education through linkages with 9 nursing programs statewide. As our health care system is reformed to incentivize primary and preventive care, there will be an increased need for larger numbers of nurses with baccalaureate and higher degrees. The Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education offers this through a progression through nursing education, which can begin at the community college level and conclude with an advanced degree.

The recent report from the Institute of Medicine on the Future of Nursing specifically calls for increased numbers of nurses prepared at the baccalaureate and graduate levels, and this program is poised to help efficiently accomplish this goal and help Oregon meet the nursing workforce needs of our future.

Additionally, the School of Nursing at OHSU is the only Oregon program to train Nurse Midwives, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners. These groups of advanced practice nurses are already a key component of our health care workforce and will be in higher demand as more people gain health coverage.

As you are aware, Oregon faces a shortage of nursing faculty, limiting the number of future nurses that can enroll in nursing programs. This is true at OHSU and elsewhere. The OHSU School of Nursing Master of Nursing Education program provides training for nurses who want to become faculty. This is only one tool in addressing the faculty issue, but it's an important one. Reductions in the OHSU School of Nursing will place additional demands on faculty and strain the ability to meet the increasing workforce needs for RNs and advanced practice nurses.

ONA looks forward to working in partnership with the OHSU School of Nursing to address some of the critical issues facing our future workforce, particularly as Oregon's Health Systems Transformation takes effect.