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Oregon Health Equity Alliance

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Urban League
of Portland

Oregon Cultural Competence Legislative Action Coalition
Testimony in Support of HB 2611A
Tuesday, May 07, 2013
Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Ron Williams, Director of Oregon Action

Good Afternoon Chair Monnes-Anderson and members of the committee.

For the record, my name is Ron Williams. I am the Executive Director of Oregon Action a statewide grassroots advocacy organization.

I am here today representing the Oregon Cultural Competence Legislative Action Coalition, which includes Oregon Action, Oregon Student Association, Urban League of Portland, Basic Rights Oregon, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, Center for Intercultural Organizing and health professional organizations and individuals as well.

We are here today in support of HB 2611-A, Cultural Competence Continuing Education for Licensed Health Professionals. Ensuring health providers are equipped to effectively serve patients of all backgrounds and cultures has been shown to improve health outcomes.

We believe that all health professionals should receive training in cultural competency in order to reduce disparities in health care outcomes and build a healthier Oregon.

This measure provides that certain boards may adopt rules under which a board may require licensees to receive cultural competence continuing education credits.

This measure also requires boards to document participation in such training.

The bill further provides that public universities and community colleges health care facilities may require health professionals who provide services to students to provide documentation of participation in continuing education opportunities related to cultural competency.

This legislation also provides that boards shall report on participation in cultural competence continuing education to the Oregon Health Authority biennially. This legislation reported a minimal fiscal impact.

Under this legislation, the Oregon Health Authority shall provide technical assistance to boards and develop a list of approved continuing education opportunities relating to cultural competence and the list will be made available to each board.

Finally, this legislation allows for boards the authority to seek and utilize existing funds for the purpose of paying the expenses of administering the tracking and reporting functions included in this legislation.

2611-A will help facilitate system wide high-quality cultural competency training, which will in turn improve the standard of care for all Oregonians. The Oregon Cultural Competence Legislative Action Coalition believes this legislation will go a long way toward improving patient experience, increasing quality of care and ultimately reducing costs, all key goals of the triple aim.

Thank you very much for your time and I am happy to answer any questions you have at this time.