

To the Members of the Oregon Senate Health Care and Human Services Committee:

The Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) House Officers Association (HOA) represents 800+ residents at OHSU, many of whom are **the future physicians of Oregon**. As co-presidents of the HOA, we would like to share the HOA's position on House Bill 2902, which aims to mandate equal pay for physicians and independently practicing non-physician mid-level providers. To be clear, this position does not represent the official opinion of OHSU, but that of the HOA and its members.

**The OHSU HOA is in opposition of H.B. 2902.** We ask that you **vote NO on H.B. 2902.**

This bill sends a message to Oregon's future primary care and psychiatry physicians that the State of Oregon believes a comprehensive medical education and minimum 3-year residency do not bring increased knowledge or clinical competence, and therefore adds no value to the care of our citizens.

Additionally, we see this bill as detrimental in several ways:

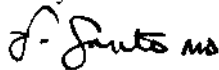
1. It will hurt the recruitment and retention of new physicians to Oregon for primary care and psychiatry. With fewer highly-trained and skilled physicians, Oregonians will face an additional barrier to adequate health care access.
2. Losing more primary care and psychiatric physicians would have disastrous consequences as Oregon tries to implement and integrate Coordinated Care Organizations and Patient-Centered Primary Care Homes.
3. It could negatively impact the overall health of Oregonians. Mid-level providers simply do not get the same depth or breadth of training that physicians do. Given the sum of their training and experience, physicians are uniquely prepared for the nuances and complexities of a patient's care.
4. The bill leads to higher health care costs. Mandating equal pay for NPs or PAs and physicians increases up-front cost with no promise of better or even equivalent care - a direct conflict to the IHI Triple Aim of better patient care, improved population health and reduced cost.

Nurse practitioners and PAs point to reimbursement cuts by some commercial insurance companies four years ago and the negative impact on their ability to practice. While we are sympathetic, equalizing reimbursement rates with those of physicians is not the answer and will not help Oregon. They could also argue for "equal pay for equal services." Of course, we respect the contribution of non-physician mid-level providers and acknowledge that our health-care system would collapse without them. But when complex cases beyond a PA or NP's training arise, they count on physicians for referral or consultation. At this point, the training discrepancy becomes clear and further argues that the services provided by a physician and the services provided by a mid-level provider are not interchangeable.

We need a collaborative process to address the concerns of NPs and PAs – one where their needs are balanced with the needs of all others involved in the health care transformation in Oregon. This bill does not meet that need.

To provide the highest quality care, guard against ballooning costs and send the appropriate message to current and future primary care physicians of Oregon, please **vote NO on H.B. 2902.**

Sincerely,



Vincent Santo, MD  
OHSU House Officers Assn. Co-President



Cory Donovan, MD  
OHSU House Officers Assn. Co-President