

MEASURE: HB 2902 A
EXHIBIT: 7
S. HEALTHCARE & HUMAN SERVICES
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SUBMITTED BY: Steven Ledford

May 9, 2012

Dear Chair Monnes-Anderson and members of the committee:

My name is Steven Ledford and I am a third year osteopathic medical student at Western University of Health Sciences COMP-NW in Lebanon, OR. I am here today to speak in favor of a compromise solution to house bill 2902-A. As a native Oregonian from Cornelius, I know firsthand, about the need for access to quality medical care in Oregon, especially in rural areas.

From my first day in osteopathic medical school, I have been trained to look at the whole person to address their health care needs. This comprehensive approach has taught me the importance of not just fighting disease, but understanding how to encourage wellness. This approach is one of the key components of the osteopathic philosophy. Amendments to House bill 2902-A that would restore nurse practitioner reimbursement and create a workgroup to develop a comprehensive approach to Oregon's primary care workforce needs is an excellent example of osteopathic principles applied at the patient, provider and system level. At the outset these amendments take a bill that was created in reaction to payment cuts to nurse practitioners and changes the focus from protection of wages for a subset of healthcare workers to protecting the interests of all members of the healthcare team as well as the integrity of the dynamics within that team.

It also encourages health care practitioners to provide care in areas where we have provider shortages. A couple of weeks ago I spoke with a representative about why she voted yes on the original bill. Her response was that her constituents needed healthcare and that this was a way to get more providers in that area. Healthcare is desperately needed in these rural areas of Oregon. That is why it is so important to consider the advantages of the amendments to house bill 2902. Amendments that provide a genuine focus on the needs of rural communities as well as considering the financial challenges that face providers that might choose to work in these areas is a win-win.

From day one, my college dean and my physician faculty have repeatedly said to me, "At the end of every day, every test, is your future patient." I take these words to heart and plan to treat every patient as I would my own family. For these reasons I strongly urge you to vote in favor of a compromise solution to House Bill 2902-A.

Thank you so much for your time,

Steven Dylan Ledford, OMSII