

Providence Health & Services  
4400 N.E. Halsey St., Building 2  
Suite 599  
Portland, OR 97213  
www.providence.org/oregon



February 11, 2013

The Honorable Mitch Greenlick  
Chair, House Health Care Committee and Members of the Committee  
State Capital  
Salem, Oregon

Re: HB 2611 – Cultural competency proposal

Dear Representative Greenlick and Members of the Committee:

Providence Health and Services offers this letter of support for HB 2611 with hopes that it will spark a statewide commitment to cultural competency throughout health care. In addition to being consistent with Providence's mission and core values, this legislation upholds one of Providence's foundational beliefs that health services be provided in a manner that respects the individual dignity of every person.

Mounting evidence is confirming that cultural competence has several benefits for both providers and patients. Benefits include enhanced patient satisfaction and treatment compliance, sensitivity to linguistic and health literacy needs, improved patient safety, promotion of early access and screening, and ultimately elimination of health disparities. Moreover, HB 2611 helps ensure that all Oregonians are receiving quality care. It helps health systems identify areas or populations where improvements might be made. This has the added benefit of making health care more efficient and, as a result, has the potential for making services more affordable and accessible over time.

Providence recognizes that the state is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. This impending increase in diversity requires health care professionals to be prepared to deliver services in ways that are patient-centered. For this reason, Providence aspires to be a leader and set an example in assuring equitable and culturally appropriate care. We do this by continuing to develop and implement cultural competence curriculum and provide diversity resources for our employees.

Ultimately, we believe this legislation is beneficial for health care organizations, diverse populations and the providers and caregivers who work on their behalf.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Mason".

James Mason, Ph.D.  
Regional Director, Diversity Initiatives  
Providence Health & Services