

February 4, 2013

TO: The Honorable Mitch Greenlick, Chair
House Committee on Health Care

FROM: Erin Greenawald, J.D., Domestic Violence Resource Prosecutor, Oregon DOJ

SUBJECT: Support for HB 2092

I am here to encourage your support of HB 2092, which would require OHA's Public Health Division to establish and administer an Injury and Violence Prevention Program.

If passed, the bill would establish clear authority for the OHA to conduct population-based activities to **reduce injury and violence**, and conduct activities with partners throughout the state to reduce injuries due to accidents, suicide, homicide, and poisoning. Currently, OHA has regulatory authority to collect data on diseases. Extending that authority to cover injury is a logical next step as **injury is one of the major causes of death in Oregon**.

As the Domestic Violence Resource Prosecutor for the Oregon Department of Justice, I collaborate with allied professionals in and around the criminal justice system who deal with Intimate Partner and Family Violence issues. One of my duties as DVRP is to co-chair the statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team. On average every year, **nearly 25% of all homicides in Oregon are related to Intimate Partner Violence**. In 2010, IPV-related homicides made up **30% of all homicides** in Oregon.

OHA has been a critical partner in the work and progress of the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team. OHA has several key members of its staff, including those who work on injury and prevention, on the Fatality Team. Additionally, research by OHA experts has significantly contributed to the Team's efforts. In its first case review, the Team identified several key areas where OHA's Injury and Prevention Program could significantly and positively impact deterrence of DV-related homicides in our state.

OHA's unique position as the primary resource in Oregon for state injury data is invaluable. Its ability to focus its expertise in that area on the **prevention of Intimate Partner and Family Violence is critical**; Oregon is and has been experiencing an epidemic in terms of Domestic Violence. Oregon has suffered an outrageously high number of deaths related to Domestic Violence in the last decade. Additionally, there is a staggering amount of domestic abuse and injury that occurs outside of those situations where death occurs. OHA's ability to implement population-based activities to intervene, reduce, and prevent Domestic Violence-related injury is necessary if Oregon is to make any real progress toward the eradication of this epidemic and its adverse effects on our communities.

*"Family Violence is both a substantial public health issue and a major 'upstream' driver for costly and debilitating physical and mental health problems. Family violence also drives the need for services in criminal justice, corrections, education, and social services."*¹

*"Addressing the cycle of family violence requires a multi-sector, systemic, and life course approach. We need to prevent violence before it starts; prevent recurrence after an episode; address the adverse health effects themselves (such as traumatic injury), and prevent the cycle of violence from continuing to the next generation."*²

¹ Oregon Public Health Division Strategic Plan 2012-2017, as cited in "Preventing Family Violence to Promote Health," CD Summary, Oregon Public Health Division, Oregon Health Authority, Vol. 61, No. 25 (12/4/12).

² "Preventing Family Violence To Promote Health," CD Summary; Oregon Public Health Division, Oregon Public Health Authority, Vol. 61, No. 25 (12/4/12).