



Testimony in Support of HB 2104

February 25th, 2013

House Health Care Committee

Oregon Nurses Association

Sarah Baessler, Director of Health Policy and Government Relation

Chair Greenlick and members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 2104.

The Oregon Nurses Association is Oregon's oldest and largest nursing union and professional association, and is proud to represent over 13,000 registered nurses, advanced practice nurses, and nursing students in Oregon.

Advanced medical imaging procedures aid in the early detection, diagnosis and treatment of cancer, cardiovascular, neurological disease, pregnancy wellness, and other health conditions. As a result of earlier and improved diagnosis, survival has increased, recovery times have decreased, and overall quality of patient care has improved.¹

While advanced medical imaging has undoubted benefits, allowing problems to be diagnosed earlier and more accurately, its value needs to be weighed against potential harms by a licensed medical professional, which include risk of cancer from the radiation.

Several commercial photo studios have been established in Oregon for the purpose of selling expecting parents "keepsake" ultrasound movies or photos of fetuses, purely for nonmedical purposes. The FDA warns that the health effects of ultrasounds on fetal tissue are not fully understood, and that an ultrasound should only be used for legitimate medical purposes. Other groups such as the American Institute of Ultrasound Medicine express similar concerns.

Ultrasounds are vital tools that help providers and expecting parents monitor many aspects of a healthy pregnancy, such as the number of fetuses, how the fetus is developing, whether the placenta is in the correct place, whether there are problems with the mother's uterus, fallopian tubes or ovaries, to view how much fluid is around the fetus, and to check for signs of a possible genetic problem.

ONA, along with other licensed health care providers, is concerned that parents who purchase a keepsake ultrasound from an untrained medical professional may forego a proper diagnostic ultrasound from a licensed provider who has the training necessary to detect serious health complications. Untrained personnel would likely fail to recognize certain types of fetal abnormalities, with potentially dangerous consequences.

Medical imaging is an invasive technology that presents public health risks if administered improperly or unnecessarily. These important medical procedures should only be performed when deemed medically appropriate and necessary.

Please support passage of House Bill 2104

Thank you.

¹ Lichtenberg FR. The quality of medical care, behavioral risk factors, and longevity growth. *Int J Health Care Finance Econ.* 2011;11:1-34.