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February 27, 2013

Honorable Mitch Greenlick, Alissa Keny-Guyer, Jim Thompson, Brian Clem, Jason Conger, Chris Harker,  
Bill Kennemer, John Lively, Jim Weidner  
House Committee on Health Care  
Oregon House of Representatives  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: Support for HB 2902**

Dear Chair Greenlick and Members of the House Committee on Health Care:

This letter is to inform you of the Oregon Center for Nursing's support of HB 2902, requiring insurers to reimburse physician assistants and nurse practitioners at same rate as physicians for same services.

The Oregon Center for Nursing is committed to ensuring a robust nursing workforce to meet the health needs of our communities. Access to primary care is essential to the health of all Oregonians. Supporting nurse practitioners by providing equal reimbursement rates for primary care services provided is crucial for maintaining access to primary care.

Physicians are not the only members of Oregon's primary care workforce. Research conducted by the Oregon Center for Nursing for the Office of Health Policy and Research shows nurse practitioners make up an estimated 21% of Oregon's current primary care providers. The inability to receive equal reimbursement for services provided has the potential to impact a significant portion of those providing primary care.

Nurse practitioners serve in many capacities, both urban and rural, and their involvement in primary care is necessary to ensure all Oregonians receive access to the care they need. Already, nurse practitioners report reduced reimbursement is leading to decreased practice hours, inability to see new patients, dropping health plan panels and patient groups, and other effects which limit their ability to provide primary care. Payment parity can help mitigate some of the barriers nurse practitioners face in providing primary care to Oregonians.

We hope you take our thoughts into consideration in determining how to continue to meet the growing need for health care access in our state.

Thank you,

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