



ONA Urges your "YES" Vote on SB 533 A-Engrossed

The Oregon Nurses Association and Nurse Practitioners of Oregon urge your "YES" vote on SB 533 A-Engrossed.

SB 533 A-Engrossed extends the time Nurse Practitioners can treat workers compensation patients from 90 days to 180 days, and the time they can authorize time loss from 60 days to 180 days. Additionally, SB 533 A-Engrossed clarifies the ability of MCO-enrolled workers to treat on the job injuries with their provider of choice—whether a physician, Nurse Practitioner, or chiropractic physician—under certain circumstances through a "come-along" provision if that provider is not part of the MCO panel.

This bill was thoroughly vetted and unanimously approved by the Management Labor Advisory Committee (MLAC). MLAC has carefully considered provider authority issues with the goal of improving access to care.

The current limits on Nurse Practitioner treatment timelines for injured workers force Nurse Practitioners to transfer patients to a physician if they need treatment beyond 90 days. In addition to interrupting continuity of care, this transfer can cause a patient to face delays in treatment, duplication of care, and increased travel time to see a physician, when there isn't a physician easily available as is the case in many parts of the state. This can ultimately result in setbacks to the patient's recovery.

Enabling Nurse Practitioners to treat injured workers for 180 days is consistent with their training and licensure, and will help ensure that injured workers have access to quality care and improved continuity of care.

In 2005, the Department of Consumer and Business Services Workers Compensation Division completed a study on Nurse Practitioners as Workers' Compensation providers. The study found no issues with Worker' Compensation care provided by Nurse Practitioners, and found that authorizing Nurse Practitioners to provide care within the Workers' Compensation system improved access to care.

Oregon Nurse Practitioners have historically demonstrated—both in and outside of the Workers' Compensation system—that they are capable providers and a key part of our health care system.

Limiting Nurse Practitioner involvement in the Workers' Compensation system doesn't serve patients well.

ONA and NPO urge your "YES" vote on SB 533 A-Engrossed.

From the Desk of Senator Lee Beyer