

From the Desk of Rep. Alissa King-Guyer, HD 46

AKG



Testimony in Support of HB 2611 with the -6 Amendments

April 1, 2013

House Committee on Health Care

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Oregon Nurses Association

Chair Greenlick and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association in support of HB 2611 with the -6 amendments. ONA appreciates the constructive changes that are made to HB 2611 through the -6 amendments. This legislation would allow health professional licensing boards to adopt rules that require each board's licensees to obtain cultural competency continuing education (CE) approved by the Oregon Health Authority.

ONA represents over 12,000 nurses and advance practice nurses who work in a variety of settings throughout Oregon. From large medical centers to small clinics, to county health departments, and correctional institutions, Oregon's nurses serve a wide array of patients, each with unique needs.

HB 2611 with the -6 amendments will assist Oregon in meeting the triple aim. The -6 amendments would ensure that the CE requirement is able to fulfill existing CE requirements for health care professionals and allows each licensing board the flexibility to determine the best approach for ensuring their licensees are culturally competent. This approach recognizes that each health profession is different and an across the board requirement may not be the most effective approach for all health care professionals.

ONA supports policies that ensure adequate, affordable access to health care services, and promotes culturally competent and sensitive nursing and health care in a variety of settings, including but not limited to clinics, schools, work places, churches, community organizations, and mobile clinics.

ONA has been actively engaged in this issue and participated in the Cultural Competency Continuing Education Committee that has been exploring opportunities to promote cultural competency CE for health care professionals. Our members have expressed an interest in further exploring the possibility of employer based cultural competency training, which would cover all employees working in a health care setting, from the receptionist to the CEO, not just those licensed by a professional board. An employer based approach has the ability to be focused on the needs of clients served by a particular facility and could go a long way in ensuring that the training is embedded within the culture of the workplace, making it more impactful for all employees.

HB 2611 with the -6 amendments will help ensure that Oregon's health care work force is effectively trained and prepared to care for Oregon's growing and diverse culture, and able to provide each patient with care that is culturally appropriate for each individual situation.

ONA urges your support of House Bill HB 2611 with the -6 amendments.