



Oregon School-Based  
Health Care Network



A Union of Professionals

## **Please Vote 'YES' on House Bill 2902 A-Engrossed**

The Oregon Nurses Association and our partners urge you to support House Bill 2902 A-Engrossed.

House Bill 2902 A-Engrossed requires insurers to reimburse Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants in independent practice the same rate as physicians, when they are providing the same **mental health** or **primary care** service and bill insurers using the same codes.

Across Oregon, Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants are a critical part of our health care delivery system, and in some parts of the state an NP or PA is the only primary care provider in town. They can diagnose and treat patients, and prescribe and dispense medications. They bill insurers using the same billing codes as physicians, when they are providing the same services.

Starting in 2009, some insurers cut reimbursement rates for some NPs and PAs. In some cases, especially in mental health and primary care, this disparity in reimbursement—based on the type of the provider, not on outcomes—is limiting patient access to care, and making it difficult for providers to continue to meet the primary care and mental health needs of Oregonians.

HB 2902 A-Engrossed requires that private insurers reimburse NPs, PAs, and Physicians the same rate when the service and billing codes are the same. This bill would not change the scope of practice of any provider.

An example: if a nurse practitioner sees a patient for management of high blood pressure and makes changes in medication, counsels for dietary changes and discusses weight management interventions, and a physician does the same, HB 2902 A-Engrossed would require private insurance companies to pay each of the providers the same amount for the visits, because the providers would be billing under the same codes. If one of the providers, the nurse practitioner or physician, treats a more complicated patient, the coding and reimbursement would properly reflect the complexity of the patient and the provider would be reimbursed at a different level, because they would be providing different care.

Current changes in our health care system that prioritize primary and preventive care as a means to keeping Oregonians healthy and limiting costs rely in part on the services provided by NPs and PAs. This bill would help ensure that these providers receive fair reimbursement from private insurance and can continue to provide care to Oregonians throughout the State.

**ONA and our partners urge you to vote 'YES' on House Bill 2902 A-Engrossed.**