



Testimony in Support of SB 1543

February 11, 2013

Senate Committee on Health Care and Human Services

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Oregon Nurses Association

Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) in support of Senate Bill 1543.

SB 1543 helps ensure that more Oregonians can access health care by preventing employers from reducing workers' hours solely to avoid providing employees with required health insurance. It also allows some higher education workers who work full-time hours in multiple part-time positions, the opportunity to qualify for health insurance.

ONA represents more than 13,000 Oregon Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Nurse Specialists and Nursing Students. Oregon Nurses are the largest segment of Oregon's health care work force, and work in nearly every health care setting, including, large hospitals, small local clinics, corrections, school-based health centers and community-based public health.

As frontline health care providers, nurses see firsthand how important insurance is for patients' short and long-term health. The importance of insurance is also apparent in health care reform efforts at the state and national levels, which have prioritized expanding insurance coverage for individuals and families.

SB 1543 will help more Oregon workers keep their jobs at their current hours and gain health insurance coverage for themselves and their families. This ensures that workers receive the benefits they earn on-the-job.

Please support the passage of SB 1543.