



Oregon Office of Rural Health

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Testimony in Favor of HB 2294
House Health Committee
February 5, 2015

Chair Greenlick and Members of the Committee;

My name is Scott Ekblad and I am the Director of the Oregon Office of Rural Health. **I am writing in support of HB 2294.** This bill will allow Oregon to update its HIT statute to take into account the fast changing environment of HIT.

Oregon's health care transformation is changing the way we look at health care and how we deliver those services. To ensure that we can meet the demands of health care reform, providers and provider sites must have access to HIT and HIT support services. This is especially true in Oregon's rural communities.

HB 2294 makes three important changes to Oregon's HIT program. First, it establishes the Oregon HIT Program within OHA, allowing OHA to provide needed support statewide. Second, it grants OHA flexibility in partnering with stakeholders and the ability to participate in partnerships and/or collaboratives that provide statewide HIT services, giving it the necessary flexibility to meet HIT needs in a changing environment. Third, HB 2294 updates statute for Oregon's HIT Oversight Council (HITOC), aligning the Council under the Oregon Health Policy Board, allowing for better strategic input and implementation of HIT policy in Oregon.

The Office of Rural Health supports HB 2294 and looks forward to working with the Oregon Health Authority to ensure that the HIT needs of rural Oregon are being met. I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Scott Ekblad".

Director, Office for Rural Health
Oregon Health & Science University