



## **Testimony in Support of HB 2541**

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Oregon Nurses Association

Chair Greenlick and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2541, which would require a Registered Nurse or other licensed health care professional to be present on blood drives both to respond to any adverse reactions that take place, to assist with the donor screening process, and the blood supply.

The Oregon Nurses Association supports HB 2541 as well as the -1 amendment.

The -1 amendment requires that an RN or other licensed professional be present during the donor intake and screening process, but doesn't require that only licensed health professionals conduct all of the intake.

ONA believes that all blood donors deserve the assurance that a nurse or other licensed professional is present when they donate blood.

Nationally, blood collection companies are moving away from staffing blood drives with nurses or other licensed health care providers. This hasn't yet been the case in Oregon. In Oregon, the American Red Cross—through its labor contract with ONA—is currently required to make its best effort to ensure that there is an RN present whenever a blood drive takes place. Because of this provision, the Red Cross in Oregon is staffing blood drives with nurses, and this legislation shouldn't have a significant cost to implement.

Additionally, the only other blood bank in Oregon had an internal policy requiring the presence of a nurse at a blood drive. This blood bank was recently purchased by an out of state company that doesn't have such a policy in place. HB 2541 preserves what has been Oregon's current practice of having a nurse present at a blood drive.

You may hear concerns that this requirement could lead to a reduction in the blood supply, we don't believe that's the case.

ONA conducted some public opinion research in 2013. The results show that Oregonians overwhelmingly expect a registered nurse to be present at blood drives, and that absent having a nurse there, are less inclined to donate. Therefore having a nurse present—as is already the case on Red Cross drives in Oregon—should not decrease the blood supply.

- 73% of Oregonians would feel less confident about the safety and security of Oregon's blood supply if unlicensed personnel were put in charge of supervising blood donation processes instead of an RN;

- An overwhelming 82% of Oregonians would be less likely to donate blood if an RN was not available to oversee blood donation procedures.

ONA certainly understands the need for donated blood, and for the safety of donors and the blood supply.

HB 2541 should provide donors with needed safety assurances, and ONA urges your support of this legislation and the -1 amendment.