



Testimony in Support of HB 2828

February 20, 2015

Jenn Baker

Oregon Nurses Association

Chair Greenlick and members of the committee:

The Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) urges your support of HB 2828.

ONA joins the American Nurses Association in support of a comprehensive single payer health care system. ONA recognizes the extraordinary progress that has occurred as a result of the Affordable Care Act and Oregon's health care delivery transformation and wants to continue to build upon the progress we've made to ensure each and every Oregonian has seamless access to quality health care services.

During the 2013 legislative session, ONA supported HB 3640, which directed the Oregon Health Authority to conduct a study comparing four types of financial structures and report their findings back to the legislature. This bill aimed to ensure the legislature has the information necessary to determine the best next steps for Oregon's health care transformation efforts. The legislation did not fund the study; it required the funds be raised. Over the past two years, advocates have worked hard to raise the funds necessary to conduct the study, but have not yet met their goal. HB 2828 allows additional time for the funds to be raised for this important work.

The United States spends—on average—twice as much on health care per person as other western countries and we are the only industrialized country that does not provide universal coverage. Oregon's nurses believe that health care is a basic human right and key component of a thriving community. They also understand that the state must have an adequate and stable financing plan to move towards a statewide single payer system. HB 2828 will help provide much needed guidance in this area.

Nurses are on the frontlines of Oregon's health care system. As such, they have first-hand knowledge of the effects of the health care crisis and the struggles uninsured Oregonians face in seeking the care they need. ONA supports HB 2828 because Oregon's nurses want their focus to be on helping their patients get well. By voting YES on HB 2828, you have the opportunity to help Oregon build on our transformation efforts and provide affordable health care for each and every Oregon resident.