



Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force

TESTIMONY in Support of HB 2758
House Health Care Committee
Submitted by: Michele Roland-Schwartz, Executive Director

February 25, 2015

Chair Greenlick, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 2758, which would ensure critical privacy protections for sensitive health care information.

The Sexual Assault Task Force is a private, non-profit, non-governmental statewide agency whose mission is to *facilitate and support a victim-centered approach to the prevention of and response to adolescent and adult sexual violence through multi-disciplinary collaboration*. The Task Force is comprised of over 100 appointed Oregonians representing a wide array of local and statewide community partners, including: community and systems-based advocates, violence prevention educators, law enforcement, medical professionals, criminal justice system practitioners, policy makers, youth, and survivors of sexual violence.

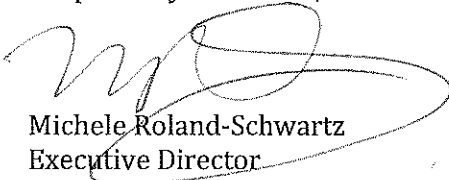
HB 2758 would extend protection to victims of sexual violence, who in addition to ongoing safety concerns, are concerned about the privacy of the healthcare information.

Healthcare privacy is of great importance to survivors of sexual assault - continued trust in the healthcare system is vital for victims after experiencing a sexual assault because of the ongoing post assault medical needs and long term safety. If a victim loses confidence in the health care system because of a confidentiality concern, they are less likely to share their medical needs and concerns, and even less likely to access the necessary follow up care to reduce chronic medical conditions. Chronic medical conditions include, but are not limited to: chronic abdominal and pelvic pain, headaches, injuries, and ongoing mental health issues.

Passing HB 2758 would ensure improved access to confidential healthcare services and long-term safety for survivors.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of this bill. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,



Michele Roland-Schwartz
Executive Director