

To: Members of the Senate Judiciary

From: Nellie deVries, Government Affairs for Salem Health

Date: April 9, 2015

Re: Please Support SB 132A

Salem Health is comprised of Salem Hospital, West Valley Hospital, Willamette Health Partners and other affiliated health care organizations offering exceptional care to people in and around Oregon's mid-Willamette Valley since 1896. Salem Hospital is one of the largest of Oregon's 59 acute care hospitals and operates the busiest emergency department in Oregon. It is a not-for-profit hospital, licensed for 454 acute-care beds.

Salem Health respectfully requests the **support SB 132A**, which amends ORS 163.165 to add people working in hospitals to the list of professions who, if they are ***intentionally, knowingly or recklessly assaulted*** while performing their jobs, the crime is a class C felony.

The workers currently covered by ORS 163.165 include professions who, like hospital staff, are ***required to serve all members of the public***: emergency medical services (ambulance) personnel, youth correction facility staff, public transit vehicle operators, taxi drivers.

Intentional ***violent acts against hospital staff occur despite extensive training*** of hospital employees about how to prevent violence as well as how to recognize and de-escalate potentially violent situations.

Most other states have already taken action to enhance criminal penalties for assaults against hospital employees; currently, at least 31 states have enhanced penalties, including Washington.

SB 132A ***does not remove any protections for mentally ill or impaired patients*** who may be violent, but are not able to form criminal intent.

Thank you for giving additional consideration to this important issue. Please contact me if you require additional clarification on a specific issue or want to discuss the content of this letter.

