



**Testimony in Support HB 2541A
Senate Health Care Committee**

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Oregon Nurses Association

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Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association in support of HB 2541A. ONA represents more than 13,000 Oregon Nurses, who make up the largest segment of Oregon's health care work force, and work in nearly every health care setting, including 40 nurses who work on blood drives in Oregon.

HB 2541A aims to protect a standard already largely in place in Oregon by requiring an LPN, RN, PA, NP, or MD be present on every blood drive operated in Oregon. This standard is vital to ensuring the safety of Oregon's blood donors, blood supply, and the patients who rely on donated blood.

Due to a contractual agreement between the American Red Cross (ARC) in Oregon and ONA, approximately 95 percent of ARC blood drives in Oregon are staffed with a nurse. ARC has demonstrated that blood collection organizations can ensure one licensed health care provider be present on every drive in Oregon without negatively impacting Oregon's blood supply or our state's ability to operate blood drives. Recently, another blood collection company began operating blood drives in Oregon. This company does not have a policy of utilizing licensed personnel, which is why legislation is needed to preserve Oregon's standard.

As result of medical advancements and evolving best practices, blood transfusions are not utilized as frequently as they once were. While this is good news, it undoubtedly presents challenges for blood collection companies. In response to the changing landscape, many of these companies have cut budgets and staff, and have moved away from using nurses and other licensed providers on blood drives altogether, staffing solely with unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP). ONA nurses value the work of UAP in a variety of setting and recognize the important role their colleagues have on blood drives. However, supervision and onsite guidance is still necessary to ensure the safety of donors, the blood supply, and patients who rely on donated blood. In OLIS, you'll find a letter of support submitted to the House Health Care Committee from workers at ARC, highlighting the important role nurses play as part of the blood collection team.

Oregon's nurses strongly believe each and every Oregonian who donates their blood deserves immediate, quality care if something goes wrong during the donation process. However, the role of a nurse on a blood drive is much more than responding to adverse reactions. Nurses have years of education and training that enable them to provide their coworkers with the support necessary to make an accurate assessment of donor suitability. While the donor intake process is often a simple series of yes/no questions, complex cases require additional assessment. In order to perform an adequate and reliable assessment, nurses rely on their training and education. To provide a Comprehensive Assessment, nurses are trained to synthesis biological, psychological, social, sexual, economic, cultural, and spiritual aspects of a client. Nurses are also trained to provide a Focused Assessment based on appraisal of a client's status and situation at hand through observation and

collection of objective and subjective data. This includes the ability to recognize and anticipate changes or potential changes in the client's health status. Nursing assessment, whether comprehensive or focused, remains firmly within the purview of nursing. Please take a moment to review the Oregon State Board of Nursing's policy statement, "The Relationship between Data Collection by Unlicensed Assistive Personnel and Nursing Assessment," that has been submitted for the record.

As ARC and other blood collection companies move away from utilizing licensed health care providers, there has been an increase in the number of FDA violations and citations issued to these companies. Inadequate training and staffing levels have been the cause for a number of the issues identified by the FDA. For example, over the past 15 years the ARC has received nearly \$50 million in fines. You can review a timeline of those violations [HERE](#).

HB 2541A is the product of much discussion and compromise. Your colleagues in the House adopted an amendment to prevent blood drives from being canceled in the case that a nurse calls in sick or does not show up for their shift. HB 2541A allows a drive that has been scheduled to be conducted without licensed personnel if the scheduled worker cancels with less than 48 hours' notice. This compromise aims to provide flexibility for blood collection organizations, rural communities, and other ARC employees. Adoption of this amendment addressed the concerns raised by the Teamsters union as they have explained in a letter available for your review on OLIS.

ONA's support of the A-engrossed bill is in the spirit of compromise and recognition that, even with this exemption, this legislation is still progress. HB 2541A increases blood drive safety and ensures we are making our best effort to protect Oregon's blood supply. ONA strongly urges your support of HB 2541A.