



## ONA Urges Your Support of HB 2541A to Ensure Blood Drive Safety

### **HB 2541 maintains the standard we've worked hard to establish in Oregon**

Oregon has worked hard to maintain high standards for blood drive safety. Due to a contractual agreement between the American Red Cross in Oregon and ONA, nearly 95% of Red Cross blood drives operated in Oregon have had a nurse present. As blood bank organizations struggle to adapt to a changing industry, we've seen a trend of mergers and staffing cuts across the country. Today, very few states still utilize nurses on blood drives. Oregon has been an exception to that rule, but we are currently under threat of moving away from this important safety standard. HB 2541A protects against that by requiring a LPN, RN, PA, NP, or MD be present on every blood drive operated in Oregon.

HB2541A address concerns about the possible cancelation of rural drives by allowing a drive to continue if the scheduled provider is unable to attend the drive with less than 48 hour notice and no other provider is available.

### **Inadequate training and staffing at core of FDA blood drive violations**

Blood drives are regulated by the FDA. As blood drive organizations have moved away from the use of licensed personnel on drives, we've seen a dramatic increase in the number of FDA citations and violations issued. Cuts, aimed at preserving profits, have primarily been in the area of staffing. Meanwhile, American Red Cross has been under federal court order to improve their collection procedures for nearly 15 years. **Between 2003 and 2012, ARC was cited by the FDA 14 times, for about \$46 million in fines, with inadequate staffing level and training at the core of many of the violations.**

For example, the 2010 violations included a citation the Red Cross' *"failure to ensure that staff handling donated blood have enough training and experience to ensure competent performance of their assigned functions" and make sure donated blood is safe.*"—2010 FDA Report

### **Nurses Protect the Blood Supply and Patients who rely on donated blood**

Nurses have vital assessment skills that serve as a resource to the rest of the blood drive team. While the intake process is often a simple series of yes or no questions, it can be more complex. The training, judgment, and assessment skills nurses acquire through their education and practice enable them to recognize potential problems and respond appropriately, enhancing the safety of the blood supply, donors, and transfusion recipients. Nurses are also better trained to respond to adverse reactions, should they occur. Oregon's Nurse Practice Act gives nurses the authority and responsibility to perform tasks that unlicensed personnel do not have the education and training to manage solely.

**The FDA's oversight continues to fall short. Please support HB 2541A to ensure the safety of Oregon's blood supply, donors, and the Oregonians who rely on donated blood**