

Providence Health & Services
4400 N.E. Halsey St., Building 2
Suite 599
Portland, OR 97213
www.providence.org/oregon



February 4, 2016

The Honorable Floyd Prozanski
Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary
State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Senate Bill 1552, Advance care directive

Dear Senator Prozanski and members of the committee:

Providence Health & Services' Mission and core values call us to nurture the well-being and honor the uniqueness of every person. Whether this is revealed through our compassionate service at the bedside or through participation in public policy discussions, as with our engagement on the advance directive work group, these values are always at our core.

Since legislation was proposed related the updating Oregon's advance directive in 2015, Providence has consistently participated in the discussion and maintained core principles related to our desired outcomes for this work. These principles include that an advance directive should:

- **Respect the diversity of people's needs** - While we recognize the opinion of the legal and broader health care communities that a single form is necessary to simplify the process, Providence strongly believes that allowing recognition of multiple forms in Oregon is the best way to respect the varied religious and cultural needs of all people.
- **Promote decision making consistent with evidence-based, clinical best practices** – When patients engage in advance care planning, this assumes that the intervention desired is within the range of medically appropriate care. Ensuring language to this end guards against patients or clinicians misunderstanding the applicability of the directions they provide.
- **Be patient and family centric** - Although execution of the document must help inform health care decisions at some future point, the primary purpose for updating the advanced directive was to make the process more accessible to Oregonians: regardless of socioeconomic class, religion or primary language. We sincerely hope the work group is able to accomplish this end within the framework this legislation allows.
- **Initiate thoughtful, values-based conversations** – The most critical part of any advance directive is to provide an opportunity for a dialogue between patients, their physicians and loved ones related to personal health care values and goals. This is a conversation people begin with the existing form, but often don't complete because of the format and complexity.

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While Senate Bill 1552 doesn't align with each of these principles, after the lengthy interim process, we believe it sufficiently meets the needs of all stakeholders engaged. Providence looks forward to continued, collaborative discussions as this work moves forward and appreciates the opportunity to provide comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin M. Dirksen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kevin" being the most prominent part.

Kevin M. Dirksen, M.Div., M.Sc.
Clinical Ethicist, Providence Center for Health Care Ethics
Providence Health & Service - Oregon