



**Support HB 2115
Jenn Baker
March 6, 2017**

Chair Barnhart and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2115 on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) and Nurse Practitioners of Oregon (NPO). NPO was established as an interest group within ONA in 1977 to enhance and at times maintain Oregon's progressive Nurse Practitioner (NP) practice.

In Oregon, Nurse Practitioners have earned broad authority, practicing independently in both primary and specialty care. Nurse Practitioners diagnose and treat illness, prescribe and dispense medication, order and interpret tests and provide comprehensive care to their patients—all with comparable outcomes to their physician colleagues. Many NPs own and operate their own clinics, increasing access to care in some of the most vital areas of our state.

The large majority of NP owned and operated clinics are entities that are fully taxed. As the consolidation of our health care systems continues, we've seen a substantial increase in interest by major hospital systems to purchase private practices and open new primary care clinics. When a hospital system acquires a clinic, the clinic is brought in under the hospital's non-profit umbrella. Current tax law does not clearly articulate whether clinics owned by a non-profit organization, yet serving the same clientele, are to be removed from the tax-rolls. HB 2115 would remedy this issue.

HB 2115 responds to the changing ownership structures of health clinics and clarifies the charitable obligation that individual clinic properties must meet in order to claim property tax exemption. Under this bill, property tax-exemptions would be granted to any non-profit clinic that serves a disproportionate share of the uninsured and Medicaid population in the state of Oregon—40% or more uninsured or Medicaid patients.

HB 2115 eliminates the current property tax advantage given to hospital system owned clinics, creating more tax fairness and equity for Nurse Practitioner clinic owners. ONA and NPO urge your support of this important legislation.

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