



## **Testimony in Support of HB2019**

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House Revenue Committee

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Chair Barnhart and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association's 15,000 members in support of HB 2019. Nurses make up the largest segment of Oregon's health care work force, working in nearly every health care setting imaginable—from large hospitals and small local clinics, to corrections, school based health centers, and local public health.

Nurses understand that access to health care can be life and death for all of us. There are currently 383,000 Oregonians and 37,000 children who don't have health insurance. Without a long-term and stable revenue solution this session, over 350,000 more Oregonians will lose access to the Oregon Health Plan, while vital nurse-led public health programs that many uninsured or underinsured Oregonians rely on will see devastating and potentially fatal cuts. ONA members do not believe this is an acceptable option and are calling on the legislature to choose to invest in our state's health.

In the mid-1970s, corporations contributed 18.5 percent of all Oregon income taxes. Today they pay just 6.7 percent, a decline of nearly two-thirds. It's clear that big corporations aren't paying their fair share, but we recognize that it's difficult to know how much more they should pay without better information.

Oregon's nurses want tax policies that are right for Oregon's economy and the services Oregonians rely on. HB 2019 will provide the legislature with an important tool to help determine the best way to move forward and ensure we're making decisions about revenue reform with accurate information. When it comes to health policy decisions, nurses call on lawmakers to prioritize policies that are evidence-based and proven outcomes. Oregon should be making revenue decisions the exact same way, and with access to information about the current system, we'll be able to.

Stronger disclosure laws are essential for making sure lawmakers and the public know which big corporations are paying their fair share, which we should be asking to pitch in more, and which are receiving the biggest subsidies from other taxpayers. HB 2019 would allow you to craft tax policies that improve the chronic instability and unfairness of our tax structure in a way that is based in data, not speculation.

Oregon's nurses urge your strong support of HB 2019.

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