



**Lake District Hospital
Home Health & Hospice
Behavioral Health & Prevention**

February 14, 2017

Oregon Legislature
900 Court Street North East
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: HB 2540

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature:

I am writing on behalf of Lake Health District and the community we serve to encourage you to support House Bill 2540, as sponsored by Representative Jodi Hack. This would permit community colleges to offer applied baccalaureate degrees in nursing to qualified individuals.

Rural hospitals, especially Lake District Hospital, struggle to find qualified nurses willing to work in our remote communities for longer than a few years. If the nurses are from the area, they tend to stay in their communities, and the best way for them to get the training is through our local Klamath Community College (KCC). While KCC has a new RN program, no longer will a 2-year degree be considered the standard for hospitals in the future. Instead, the 4-year baccalaureate level degrees will be the norm. As such, if our community members enroll in the KCC nursing program, it would be much better for our community to have 4-year degreed nurses. I am certain this is true for all the other rural communities that have a hospital and are served by a community college that could have a program like the one at Klamath Community College.

I urge you to approve this bill.

Sincerely yours,

Charles B. Tveit
Chief Executive Officer

Lake Health District