

March 25, 2017

House Committee on Health Care
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 9730

I am writing today to strongly encourage you to lend support to HB 3085, which is currently before the legislature. This bill would establish a Health Care Professional Training Fund that would positively impact the ability to train healthcare professionals in Oregon for years to come.

With the oversight of the Oregon Health Policy Board and OHA, the funds would be used to establish training priorities, address healthcare shortages and enhance training capacity to meet the need for excellent healthcare providers across the state. Since healthcare providers tend to stay in close proximity to the area of training, it would be wise to fund training programs outside large metropolitan areas and away from the I-5 corridor.

As a registered nurse, I have seen firsthand the need for quality healthcare by underserved individuals in Oregon. In my role both as a clinical nurse and as an educator, I have also had the opportunity to work with individuals struggling to get into healthcare training programs and once enrolled in programs, seen them struggle to meet tuition costs. These are the individuals, who once qualified, are mostly likely to stay in Oregon to practice. I have also been involved with academic institutions and healthcare organizations who are interested in increasing access to high quality educational programs to meet the growing demand, who are thwarted because of the high cost to existing programs or start to start new training programs. These barriers create a self-perpetuating cycle of healthcare shortages.

I believe that HB 3085 will be a positive step toward increasing the opportunities for training medical professionals in Oregon and has the potential to improve access to high quality healthcare in people living in Oregon communities.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Nancy Bell

Nancy Bell, RN, MPH

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