



## **Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 1540**

February 20, 2017

House Committee on Human Services and housing

Nancy MacMorris-Adix, CNM, MN

Chair Keny-Guyer and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony in support of Senate Bill 1540 as it is currently written. My name is Nancy MacMorris-Adix and I am a Certified Nurse Midwife and proud member of the Oregon Nurses Association. ONA represents 15,000 nurses providing patient care in nearly every health care setting throughout the state, including acute care hospitals, public health departments as well as independent primary and behavioral health practices. As providers, I along with my colleagues strongly believe that protecting patient confidentiality is an absolute imperative and that mandatory reporting requirements should not intrude on this principle that is central to our professional code of ethics.

SB 1540 is a thoughtful proposal that appropriately balances this need while helping to ensure that minors can be adequately protected from genuine abuse moving forward.

Professional nursing practice standards have long-emphasized confidentiality and privacy as it relates to preserving the integrity of the provider-patient relationship in our state. Our provider community rightly recognizes that adolescents are much more apt to seek care for contraceptive services and vital reproductive health education if they are assured of patient privacy in the relationship with their provider. Conversely, concerns that a provider visit may trigger mandatory reporting to state authorities could otherwise deter teens who engage in consensual sexual activity from pursuing preventative care or treatment of more serious issues regarding sexual health. SB 1540 clarifies and affirms this important dynamic in statute by way of better aligning mandatory reporting requirements with long-standing health care provider practice.

Additionally, the Oregon Health Authority's administrative policies provide agency guidance on mandatory reporting is to not require reporting of consensual sexual activity for anyone older than the age of 12.<sup>1</sup> SB 1540 as currently written is appropriately reflective of these guidelines that were most recently updated in 2015.

ONA appreciates this thoughtful effort to effectively update mandatory reporting standards as it relates to adequately preserving the integrity of the provider-patient relationship moving forward.

**I urge your support for the current version of SB 1540.**

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<sup>1</sup>Oregon Health Authority. *Reproductive Health Provider Resources*. <http://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYPEOPLEFAMILIES/REPRODUCTIVESEXUALHEALTH/RESOURCES/Pages/Resources.aspx>. Accessed Feb. 5, 2018.