

OREGON HOSPICE &
PALLIATIVE CARE
ASSOCIATION



Improving quality of life
at the end of life.

Barbara Hansen, MA, RN
Chief Executive Officer
Direct/Cell 541.231.2440
hansen@oregonhospice.org

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Rep. Prusak and Members of the House Committee on Health Care,

This written testimony is submitted in opposition to SB 219.

I oppose SB 219 based on my role with the Oregon Hospice and Palliative Care Association and as a member of the Oregon POLST Coalition. I have over 35 years of experience working in Home Care and Hospice and have been in my role with the OHPCA for almost 6 years. (Please note: I also serve on the Advance Directive Adoption Committee and on the Oregon Palliative Care and Quality of Life Interdisciplinary Advisory Council, but I am not writing today as a representative of those groups.)

The plan to have a “registry” for Advance Directives is very problematic. I can attest that there is a lot of “churn” in decision-making in the last few weeks of a person’s life. Many terminally-ill individuals elect the Hospice Medicare benefit and do not yet have an Advance Directive. People who do already have an Advance Directive frequently change their minds about who they wish to serve as their Health Care Representative and about other end-of-life care preferences. It would be extremely challenging to ensure that the “Advance Directive Registry” actually reflects a person’s current *wishes*.

That is the other reason for my opposition: an Advance Directive reflects a person’s wishes and beliefs. The Advance Directive, while important, is not a set of “Medical Orders”. The POLST form is a set of Medical Orders. Thus, the POLST Registry can communicate to EMS and Emergency Department staff the orders that should be followed by health care providers. This is a very important distinction between the POLST and an Advance Directive.

Thank you for accepting this written testimony in opposition to SB 219.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Hansen, RN". The signature is written in a cursive style.

CEO – Oregon Hospice & Palliative Care Association