



February 15, 2021

Representative Prusak, and the members of the Committee:

My name is Iria T. Nishimura. I am the executive director at Willamette Valley Hospice and Palliative Care & Chair of the Public Policy Committee for Oregon Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.

Willamette Valley Hospice and Palliative Care supports House Bill 2981. Palliative Care is specialized, holistic, patient-centered medical care focused on providing symptom relief with the goal of improving quality of life for both the patient living with serious illness and their family.

For the past 10 years, we have been fortunate to be able to provide home-based palliative care in our five county market-area. Interdisciplinary palliative care with a registered nurse leading the team has been a very successful model at providing quality care to the seriously ill population. According to the patient care survey we conducted in 2020, 90.6% of our palliative care patients agreed or strongly agreed that their quality of life improved after receiving our home-based palliative care services.

The goal of Palliative Care is to provide symptom relief and avoid unwanted hospitalizations or trips to the emergency department. A Kaiser Permanente study on our home-based palliative patients showed the decrease in emergency room visits and hospitalizations saved more than \$8,000 per enrolled member.

Oregon rural communities are challenged with inadequate access to health care. Home based palliative care provides a viable option of care with substantial evidence available documenting improved quality of life and health care cost savings.

Representative Prusak, and the members of the Committee – thank you for this opportunity to testify for House Bill 2981.

Respectfully submitted,

Iria T. Nishimura MSN, RN