



Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 428

February 24, 2021

House Committee on Health Care

Deborah Riddick, JD RN

Good afternoon Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Knopp, and members of the committee. My name is Deborah Riddick. I am the Director of Public Policy and Government Relations for the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). We represent 15,000 registered nurses and professional members, and the Nurse Practitioners of Oregon. ONA stands in strong support of SB 428 which extends for one year sunset on Task Force on Universal Health Care and its recommendations deadline for one year.

Our membership has a long history of supporting the states efforts to extend comprehensive quality care to its residents. It's a goal that is in perfect alignment with our stated mission and vision; to advocate for patients, our nursing practice and nurses to improve Oregon's health care systems.

As evidenced by the pandemic, and long before, our system does serve all our residents equally. Fortunately, we are a state that has invested a lot of resources in addressing systems transformation and the extension of the work of SB 770 requires passage of SB 428. The delays brought about from the all-hands-on-deck response to COVID resulted in an abbreviated timeline for this important work to commence and as a result more time is needed to create a well-considered and practical, but ambitious, recommendation for the state to consider.

As an ONA representative member of the SB 770 taskforce I have had the opportunity to work with some of the best minds in the state to consider the possibilities and know that everyone participating is doing so with a commitment to meeting the current timeline. In my opinion, this work is too important to be rushed. To produce recommendations under the SB 770 mandate will comply with the law but will not produce recommendations that have the best opportunity for success which, collectively, is our ultimate goal.

We urge your support of SB 428 to continue the work of the taskforce so that we move closer to providing universal health care for every Oregonian.