



Testimony in Support of SB 169

January 26, 2021

Senate Committee on the Labor and Business

Deborah Riddick JD, RN

Good morning Chair Riley, Vice-Chair Hansell, members of the committee. My name is Deborah Riddick. I am the Director of Government Relations for the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). We represent 15,000 registered nurses throughout the state, as well as our member organization, the Nurse Practitioners of Oregon (NPO). The ONA and NPO membership support SB 169, which would void and hold unenforceable noncompete agreements beyond a narrowly defined set of employment relationships and circumstances.

The ONA and NPO believe the limitations advanced in SB 169 are necessary updates to current law. Passage of these provisions would enable our nursing workforce to meet our state's goal of providing accessible health care to patients by the broadest array of qualified providers possible. The limitations under current law serves the system rather than the dedicated providers and the communities we mutually serve.

As evidenced by our current pandemic, it is vital that providers be able to reach patients without the restrictions imposed by these noncompete agreements not simply in the short-term but in the long-term, as well. In addition, our members believe that the use of these agreements, in provider settings, result in an inequitable distribution of networks within systems and exacerbate the access disparities between urban and rural communities all across the state. The Oregon Center on Nursing has reported that Oregon, unlike most states, does not have a nursing provider shortage, rather we have a maldistribution problem. Eliminating the use of noncompete agreements in nursing practice has the potential to open opportunities for providers and increase access for patients within these communities.

In the interest of public health and safety, and support our emergency preparedness efforts, ONA and NPO request your support in passage of SB 169