



February 8, 2022

The Honorable Kathleen Taylor  
Chair, Senate Committee on Labor and Business  
State Capitol  
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Senate Bill 1545 – Future Ready Oregon

Dear Chair Taylor and members of the committee:

Providence in Oregon is a not-for-profit Catholic network of hospitals, care centers, health plans, physicians, clinics, home health care and affiliated specialty services guided by a Mission of caring that the Sisters of Providence began in the Northwest more than 165 years ago. As Oregon's largest health care provider and one of the largest private employers in the state, with nearly 20,000 caregivers, Providence is committed to fostering a strong workforce and contributing to the economic security of our communities.

With eight hospitals and more than 90 primary care clinics across the state, our caregivers provide compassionate, high-quality care to all that need our services. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Providence has also stepped forward to serve as a critical public health safety-net. In addition to providing care for confirmed COVID-19 positive patients, we have partnered with community organizations to administer COVID-19 vaccinations and booster shots closer to places people live and work. Although our caregivers have continued to meet the challenge and respond to needs as they evolve, the last two years have exacerbated existing workforce challenges - currently Providence has nearly 2,500 open positions.

Developing a diverse, qualified health care workforce to serve Oregonians in the decades to come will require broad, community-wide strategies. Senate Bill 1545 makes meaningful investments in workforce development and creates important opportunities for public-private partnerships. As a part of Providence's commitment to diversifying the health care workforce, we are particularly interested in promoting collaboration between health systems and Oregon universities, community colleges and high schools to strategize about growth among specific specialties.

Thank you to Governor Brown for her attention and leadership bringing Future Ready Oregon forward, and to members of the Committee for working through the final details. Providence looks forward to engaging in this effort as it moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Olson".

William Olson  
Chief executive officer  
Providence Health & Services - Oregon