



OREGON UROLOGY INSTITUTE *Please help us Train & Employ Skilled Surg Techs!*

Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care:

Our Surgery Center, the Oregon SurgiCenter provides critical surgery services to patients throughout the Willamette Valley. We employ hundreds of community members and serve thousands of patients in the Eugene/Springfield area with high quality care. **We need your urgent assistance on a bill that has been referred to your committee**, and which is essential to the surgery centers and hospitals in Lane County and throughout the entire Willamette Valley area.

For 3+ years, we've been working to address a severe shortage of surgical technologists in ASCs and Hospitals throughout the state. The problem is that the existing - - and statutorily limited - - training system only generates about a dozen Surg Techs, and we see individual hospitals that have that many openings each year.

HB4106 was drafted in 2020 by Rep. Nosse and BOLI. The bill includes changes that were negotiated at the end of the last session (but which LC couldn't complete in time for the work session). This session's bi-partisan Chief Co-Sponsors are Reps. Schouten and Moore Green, as well as Senator Patterson. BOLI Commissioner Hoyle has been instrumental in the bill drafting and will be overseeing the program. It has had hearings in the House Health Care Committee, but this year was assigned to your committee.

The bill is even more needed now than it was last year. The severe workforce crisis is getting worse in ASCs and Hospitals, and other professionals, especially nurses, are having to step down to complete tasks that should be filled by surgical technologists. That's not fair to them. As a result, the bill has been endorsed by the Oregon Nurses Association.

In rural and in urban areas alike, **the lack of workforce is delaying needed surgeries, negatively impacting patients and their health.** HB4106 will allow us to train dozens of additional surgical techs, in communities throughout the state. As a reminder, the bill was drafted jointly with BOLI, which will run the program along with the Joint Committee, per ORS. It includes national accreditation, and strict safety standards (required both by the Joint Committee and by the national accreditation body).

This is a top priority not only of the ASCs but also of the Hospital systems. **We urgently need to get this bill passed and the apprenticeship program set up.** We are asking for your help in making sure that we (finally) **get this bill through the Legislature this year.**

Sincerely,

Terry FitzPatrick

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