

Chair Nosse, Vice Chair Goodwin, Vice Chair Nelson and other members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Bobby Levy, state representative for House District 58. I am testifying today to express my support of House Bills 2552, 2602, 2626, and 2723, legislation that will help retain and expand Oregon's rural healthcare workforce.

According to the Health Resources & Services Administration, Oregon has 472 Health Professional Shortage Areas. Only two counties in our state are not entirely designated as Primary Care HPSA's by the Oregon Health Authority's Primary Care Office. Clearly, Oregon faces a rural healthcare worker shortage.

HB 2552 provides increases tax credits ranging from \$6,000-\$10,000 for doctors, podiatrists, and acupuncturists who live between 10-50 miles away from major population centers. HB 2602 covers nurses and nursing assistants. HB 2626 adds licensed mental health professionals, certified medical laboratory scientists, and medical laboratory technicians.

House Bill 2723 amends eligibility criteria for rural medical provider tax credits. This bill removes eligibility limitations on adjusted gross income of individual rural medical providers. It also removes restrictions on types of hospitals and limits on tiered amounts of allowable credit based on distance from certain municipalities.

While this is a small investment for the State, rural communities around Oregon will be greatly enriched by the presence of medical providers living and working there as a result of this incentive. Doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, and other providers do not simply clock out when they are done with work. Ninety percent of doctors who participated in a 2006 study in the Journal of the American Medical Association rate community participation, political involvement, and collective advocacy as important. Across House District 58 and the rest of Oregon, healthcare professionals contribute their professional skills on nonprofit boards, elected bodies, and local government commissions. They donate generously to local fundraisers and help rally their community for important causes.

Colleagues, most of us see healthcare worker shortages in our districts that require bold solutions. With meaningful tax credits, the health gap between rural and urban centers can begin to close. House Bill 2552 is that bold solution to bring relief to underserved Oregonians in rural communities.

Best,
Rep. Bobby Levy, HD 58

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobby Levy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Bobby" on top and "Levy" below it, both starting with a capital letter.