

February 15, 2023

The Honorable Jason Kropf
House Committee on Judiciary

RE: Support of HB 2919

Delivered electronically via OLIS

Chair Kropf, Members of the Committee:

Salem Health Hospitals & Clinics is a non-profit organization with facilities that include Salem Hospital, West Valley Hospital in Dallas, and Salem Health Medical Group primary and specialty clinics spread throughout the mid-Willamette Valley. Salem Health serves patients in Marion and Polk, as well as Benton, Lincoln, and Yamhill counties with acute care, urgent care, primary, and specialty care.

I'm writing in support of HB 2919. At Salem Health, we are relentlessly focused on building something that we refer to as "a culture of safety." This culture envisions a place where it isn't just okay to point out problems, but is encouraged. Our Lean philosophy and Magnet status support this culture. We value transparency and hold the belief that improvement requires not that we ignore or cover up problems, but make them visible so they can be fixed, and create stronger processes to protect patients.

Every staff member at Salem Health is empowered to vocalize potential threats to patient or staff safety, no matter how large or small, in order to create robust systems that protect patients. This dedication to frontline problem solving also allows our staff to implement innovative ideas that improve patient care.

The best solutions for change come from nurses, providers and staff working with patients – not from management. Our nurses have worked hard to create systems that reduce the possibility for mistakes, and they will continue to develop innovative practices. This work is an integral part of the culture of safety that we foster at Salem Health.

As part of that culture of safety, nurses must be able to report when they have made a mistake or a near-mistake. Often medical mistakes are not the result of human error, but poor processes. Stronger processes can only be built in a culture of transparency and safety. HB 2919 helps support this culture of transparency, so we can stand with nurses, providers and staff working in extremely dynamic, high risk environments.

Thank you to Representative Nelson for bringing this important bill forward. Providers need to know that legislators have their back and that you fully support their important work.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Nester Wolfe
President & CEO