



KLAMATH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Klamath Community College provides accessible, quality education and services in response to the diverse needs of the student, business, and community. The College supports student success in workforce training, academic transfer, foundational skills development, and community education.

TO: Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Suzanne Weber, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Amy Blankenship, MSN-Ed, RN

Nurse Educator, Klamath Community College

Date: March 1st, 2023

RE: Support for SB 523

Dear Senators of the State Committee on Education:

Thank you for taking the time to consider this important SB 523 as it pertains to many. As a nursing faculty now for almost 5 years at both a university and community college level in Oregon, I have experience in education at both the bachelor prepared and associate degree level in nursing. Students at both universities and community colleges have differing needs and requirements. A few main factors being the cost and the community.

Some of our community colleges are in rural areas, and as we know, many individuals have lower socioeconomic status in these communities and community colleges are more affordable. Community colleges not only can offer a lower cost to students to obtain their bachelors in nursing, but students that have already attended the community college have voiced that they desire to attend where there is familiarity. This desire for community shows us that students would likely attend their community college to obtain a bachelors in nursing.

Some have been concerned about taking students or funding away from universities and having to share clinical space. Many students from our community colleges are not attending other colleges in Oregon and therefore would not take away students or funding from Oregon universities. Furthermore, clinical space is not a concern as many RN to BS programs will be online and there are other opportunities such as simulations with standardized patients (real actors) if needed for face-to-face programs.

We should consider how the addition of the RN to BS program in community colleges would benefit Oregonians overall when we ponder SB 523. The partnership of community colleges and universities programs in Oregon would not only provide nursing students greater opportunity, it would expand our nursing workforce, and therefore create more robust, quality care for our aging population and Oregonians overall.