

Submitter: Chris Hamper
On Behalf Of: Community Members
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB60

I strongly oppose capping or lowering the educational standard for paramedics in the state of Oregon.

As a paramedic, EMS educator and community member I take comfort and pride in knowing our emergency medical services personnel are some of the best trained and educated in the nation. This proposal aims to address critical workforce shortages in Oregon. However, if we examine other states without the Associate's degree requirement we will find an equal or greater shortage of paramedics, lower wages and worse outlook. The workforce shortage is a direct result of over-work, over-stress and under paid personnel as a result of the harsh work environments, low pay and pandemic woes.

There are ways to address the EMS workforce shortage that are not dangerous to the public and that will improve public access to help while improving lower-than-living wage that paramedics scrape together.

This bill will not be effective in achieving the goal of improving access to help.