



March 29, 2023

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for HB 3596

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care:

**DCIPA, the Physicians of Douglas County (DCIPA)**, is physician led and owned organization in Douglas County. Founded in 1993, DCIPA was a contractor in the Oregon Health Plan from 1994 to 2013. On January 1, 2013, DCIPA partnered with Mercy Medical Center in Roseburg to launch Umpqua Health, LLC. Now, with the Obama-care expansion population, Umpqua Health Alliance provides healthcare to 26,000 residents.

DCIPA strongly encourage your support for SB 3596, which clarifies the allowable practice of surgical technology at health care facilities by individuals who have completed and are certified by an apprenticeship program. As you are no doubt aware, surgical technologists assist surgeons by preparing operating rooms for surgery, including making sure supplies are sterile and ready for use, and maintaining a sterile environment in the operating room.

In 2015, HB 2876 enacted certification, educational, and continuing education requirements for surgical technicians in the state of Oregon. Just last year, in recognition of the surgical technologists workforce shortage, the legislature enacted HB 4106, which established an apprenticeship path for surgical technologists. Unfortunately, due to a drafting error in HB 4106, the state is presently hamstrung regarding its ability to establish a workable apprenticeship program without also requiring participants to earn a two-year degree before starting the apprenticeship program.

HB 3596 will permit the surgical technologist apprenticeship programs to work as intended. Therefore, we ask the committee to pass HB 3596 to help shore up the surgical technologists' workforce shortage for the benefit of Oregon patients.

Sincerely,

*Bart Bruns, MD*

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*Serving the needs of physicians and their patients in Douglas County.*