

Submitter: Shawn Adams

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB4070

My name is Shawn Adams, and I am a district nurse contracted with Roseburg Public Schools, but employed by Douglas Educational Service District. I'm writing in support of HB 4070, which provides critical resources that youth and families across Oregon need now. Oregon students have limited access to school nurses; 25% of districts have no school nurse and another quarter of districts have less than one full time school nurse. Since 2019, School Health Services Planning Grants, funded by legislation such as this bill, have improved access to school nursing services in grantee districts, and led to the creation of a School Nurse Pilot Program. This program has begun the essential work of defining what school nursing model can offer students.

I support this bill because in the 4 years that I have transitioned into School Nursing from the hospital I have worked for a private school, Lake Oswego SD, and now an ESD. I love what I do but every year it has been questionable if I would have a job to go back to. Our ESD has gone from 2 full time nurses in 2015 (addressing 13 SD and unable to meet the basic requirements to 8 full time nurses addressing 13 school districts and meeting their needs). The school districts that we serve are rural, and they get our services at a discounted rate that does not even cover our employment costs to the ESD, or the miles that it takes to serve our schools. Now, for all of us to continue serving our contracts we are looking for funding to cover our costs for our department so all 8 of us can continue to serve our districts. With COVID funds running out our department is looking to grants.

Oregon students need access to school nurses and this bill will continue efforts to increase this access. As a district nurse, I assist families with access to care, knowledge regarding immunizations, I decrease absenteeism rates, I offer my time and knowledge to disadvantaged families with little to no access to healthcare. I assist my school district that I am contracted with in health policies, and medical situations. I urge you to vote yes on HB 4070.

Thank you,

Shawn Adams, RN