

March 20, 2025

Oregon State Legislature  
Senate Committee on Health Care  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301  
*Submitted electronically via OLIS*

**RE: SB 537, relating to violence in health care settings**

Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee:

The Hospital Association of Oregon and our 61 community hospitals are committed to workplace violence prevention policies that support workers, patients, and their family and friends, and help victims seeking justice. Hospitals are places of healing, and we believe in improving collective safety and security. Although we support workplace violence prevention policies, we are opposed to SB 537.

In previous legislative sessions and during the interim periods, legislators have convened broad coalitions of stakeholders to develop workplace violence prevention proposals that have resulted in introduced legislation that promoted collaborative solutions. As active participants in those working groups, we appreciated the opportunity to contribute to collective efforts to support health care workers. SB 537 has not had sufficient stakeholder engagement.

SB 537 is not the only bill that addresses workplace violence this session. We appreciate the work by stakeholders to develop and move forward SB 170-A, which would increase the offense level of assault in the fourth degree when the defendant commits the assault against a victim performing official duties as part of the victim's employment and has certain prior convictions for assault in the workplace. We agree with the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) testimony in support of this bill. We are also in agreement with ONA that SB 170-A is a step in the right direction to provide an additional tool to law enforcement and provide hospital workers with protections like those currently available to some other workers in Oregon.



Oregon's hospitals have done a tremendous amount of work to protect their workers from violence in the workplace, and hospitals are committed to additional efforts. We welcome future discussions during the interim on collaborative solutions to support workers. SB 537 is not the right approach.

Sincerely,



Troy Duker  
Director of Government Affairs  
Hospital Association of Oregon

**About the Hospital Association of Oregon**

Founded in 1934, the Hospital Association of Oregon (HAO) is a mission-driven, nonprofit trade association representing Oregon's 61 hospitals. Together, hospitals are the sixth largest private employer statewide, employing more than 70,000 employees. Committed to fostering a stronger, safer, more equitable Oregon where all people have access to the high-quality care they need, the hospital association supports Oregon's hospitals so they can support their communities; educates government officials and the public on the state's health landscape and works collaboratively with policymakers, community based organizations and the health care community to build consensus on and advance health care policy benefiting the state's four million residents.

