

OREGON ATTORNEY GENERAL'S SEXUAL ASSAULT TASK FORCE



SUPPORT FUNDING FOR CRIME VICTIM AND SURVIVOR SERVICES IN THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUDGET SENATE COMMITTEE ON RULES

APRIL 7, 2025

Dear Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shannon Rose and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force **to urge support of funding for HB 3070: Funding for the operation of the SANE Certification Commission (SCC).**

Formed in 1999 by then Attorney General Hardy Meyers, the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force (or Oregon SATF) is a statewide, nongovernmental nonprofit. Our mission is to facilitate and support a collaborative, survivor-centered approach to the prevention of and response to sexual violence. We are designated in state statute to coordinate the statewide SANE Certification Commission.

SANEs, or Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, provide some of the most sensitive and specialized emergency healthcare services in our state. The experience of a sexual assault has both acute and long-term impacts on physical and mental health for victims. SANEs are a crucial resource in facilitating healing from these impacts and serve an important and unique bridging role to advocates, law enforcement, and others who may be involved in working with a survivor after experiencing an assault. In addition to undergoing specialized education in trauma-informed post assault care, SANEs are also trained to collect forensic evidence which can be later used in sexual assault investigations and prosecutions. **Multiple studies show clearly that survivors that work with a Certified SANE post assault have better outcomes, both in their health and healing, as well as in criminal court cases, where SANEs are often called to serve as expert witnesses.**

The services that the SCC, and Oregon SATF as the coordinating agency, provide are of critical benefit to everyone impacted by and working on sexual assault response across Oregon, including law enforcement, prosecutors, healthcare professionals and victim advocates. **HB 3070 provides \$400k as a foundation of funding for the operation and oversight of the SANE Certification Commission (SCC).** The primary purpose of the SCC is to ensure that registered nurses, advanced practice nurses, physicians, and physician assistants providing sexual assault medical forensic examinations in Oregon possess the necessary training and qualifications to deliver the best standards of medical forensic care to victims of sexual assault. As established in Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 137-084-0500, the SCC is coordinated by the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force and appoints a multidisciplinary team of professionals to carry out this important work.

The number of certified SANES/SAEs across the state is critically low, especially in rural areas, often resulting in victims of sexual assault driving hundreds of miles to reach qualified care or foregoing care due to lack of access. I believe we can all agree that this is unacceptable. **All survivors, regardless of geographic location, should have access to trauma-informed, skilled post assault care. Solving this service gap takes investments in dollars, energy, and expertise.** Since receiving a one-time investment last biennium, Oregon SATF and the SCC have already been able to expand outreach and individual peer support for those interested in becoming SANEs, and expanded training opportunities to meet certification. We need to continue to expand these efforts to create a robust, supported SANE healthcare workforce that is ready to meet the needs of all sexual assault survivors. **I urge to you pass and fully fund HB 3070 for this biennium and would recommend a note that this funding become current service level in future budgets in order to maintain support and services.**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your service to Oregon Communities.

Sincerely,



Shannon Rose
Executive Director
Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force