

Submitter: Cristian Mendoza Ruvalcaba
On Behalf Of: Oregon Nurses Association - CHP
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1570

Good afternoon, Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden and members of the committee, my name is Cristian Mendoza Ruvalcaba. I am a nurse practitioner from Medford, and I am here as a member of the Oregon Nurses Association. Although I am an employee of OHSU, this is a personal opinion and does not represent the opinion of OHSU. I am here in support of SB 1570, Healthcare Without Fear.

In addition to my membership in ONA, I serve on the Cabinet on Health Policy, which supports ONA's leadership in advancing this legislation with Senator Campos. I am here to share that support and respectfully urge passage of the Healthcare Without Fear Act.

Healthcare facilities should be places of healing and trust, not fear or intimidation. Hospitals exist to provide care, not to serve as sites of immigration enforcement. Recent federal policy changes have removed long-standing protections for sensitive locations, creating uncertainty and risk for both patients and healthcare workers in Oregon. SB 1570 addresses these concerns by establishing clear standards to protect patients and support health care workers. These protections help preserve patient trust and encourage timely access to healthcare.

As a nurse practitioner, I have had the honor of caring for people from diverse backgrounds, regardless of immigration status. Nursing ethics obligate us to care for everyone with dignity and compassion. When patients are afraid to seek care, health outcomes worsen, public health risks increase, and trust in healthcare systems erodes.

I am deeply concerned about enforcement occurring in healthcare settings. It can turn places of healing into spaces of fear. It can lead individuals to avoid preventive care, delay treatment, or refuse emergency care. Recently, federal immigration agents detained a Gresham family outside a Portland hospital while the parents were attempting to seek emergency care for their 7-year old child. Situations like this show the chilling effect enforcement can have on families seeking urgent care. No child or family should be deterred from healthcare due to fear.

SB 1570 reinforces the principle that healthcare settings must remain safe and accessible for all Oregonians. Protecting access to care strengthens individual wellbeing, community health, and public trust. Healthcare is a human right, and every person deserves compassion and dignity. Oregonians need these protections now.

I respectfully urge your support of this bill. Thank you.