



# Improve Access to Qualified Genetic Counseling for Oregonians

## Support HB 3231, Genetic Counselor Licensing

Genetic conditions can profoundly impact people's lives. HB 3231 requires that providers who assist individuals in understanding the implications of genetic conditions be licensed as genetic counselors through the Oregon Health Authority Health Licensing Office. Licensure would assure that minimum education, continuing education and certification standards have been met by individuals using the title of 'genetic counselor.'

### Access

Genetic counseling is a specialized health care service, with fewer than 60 genetic counselors practicing in Oregon. While many Oregonians around the state need the services of genetic counselors, access to providers is limited. Because Oregon does not offer a license for genetic counselors, hospital administrations often require them to work under a primary physician in order to provide services as they do with all unlicensed providers. Licensure would give genetic counselors the ability to work directly with a patient's primary provider no matter where they are located and allow more Oregonians to maintain a relationship with their community provider as they receive genetic counseling services.

### Safety and Quality

Licensure provides Oregonians certainty in knowing that their provider has met necessary education standards, in addition to continuing education standards. The purpose of licensure is to require that licensees have the appropriate degree of competency necessary to ensure that public health, safety and welfare are protected.