



Testimony in Support of SB 758

March 17, 2021

Senate Committee on Health

Akil S. Patterson, MLS

Greetings, Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Knoop, and members of the committee.

My name is Akil Patterson, and I serve as the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) Political Organizer.

Today I submit, to the committee, testimony in support of SB 758 on behalf of ONA's 15,000 registered nurses, the Nurse Practitioners of Oregon, and professional member affiliates throughout the state. I am honored to represent them and serve as a voice for our member organization.

In 21 states and the district of Columbia, nurse practitioners have the explicit legal authority to prescribe. The application for prescriptive authority may be separate from Nurse Practitioners credentialing, and NPs prescribing controlled substances generally must register with a regulatory agency.

Oregonians have some of the best APRNs and strongest policies for APRNs that allow for advanced practice professionals to proscribe opioids and while we are not here to speak to old arguments the evidence is substantial that Cannabis does not have the addictive properties of those medications in the opioid family. While all 50 states and Washington DC, nurse practitioners can prescribe controlled substances, here in Oregon APRNs cannot prescribe something that their professional colleagues do, which is why SB 758 must pass. Oregon has restricted the legal right of these healthcare professionals. They are simply seeking that the state recognize their craft and authority to independently prescribe medication allowed to all their counter parts.

We treat and call Cannabis a medication in this state and have done so for many years, yet we have overlooked an important group of people who we have called healthcare heroes during a pandemic. Nurse Practitioners are entitled to be able to give the effective care that their patients need and so we call of this committee to do what is needed to rectify the issue.

ONA believes that this legislation seeks to improve access to treatment and care, and we support the passage of this legislation.