



Testimony on House Bill 2328  
February 25, 2020  
Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Deborah Riddick, JD RN

Good afternoon Chair Prusak, Vice Chairs Salinas and Hayden, and members of the committee. My name is Deborah Riddick. I am the Director of Public Policy & Government Relations for the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). We represent 15,000 registered nurses and professional members, and the Nurse Practitioners of Oregon. The ONA supports HB 2328, which would prohibit discrimination against health care providers' participation in or coverage under health benefit plan by insurers, in recognition of the diverse landscape of professions currently serving Oregon communities.

Oregon has long established itself as a national leader on Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) scope of practice. As a result, patients all over the state have access to these highly skilled and cost-effective providers. Unlike many states, Oregon embraces a robust workforce of licensed and certified providers who offer an array of healing services. Our residents utilize them and have come to appreciate the benefits they provide. Our APRNs practice under our state's strong practice parity laws which are comprehensive, though not complete; this is not true universally for all non-physician providers because of insurer exclusions.

Under current law, insurers can limit and exclude providers who, otherwise, meet state requirements for practice. This lack of reimbursement and recognition is costly for the patient who, despite having insurance coverage, must pay out of pocket or forgo care, if unable to pay. It also suppresses the market for providers, who must rely exclusively on clientele who have the means to pay. This combination of negative impacts has a disparate impact on many BIPOC and low-income communities, who could benefit from these services to improve their health and quality of life. It arbitrarily limits access which is in stark opposition to more than a decade of measures to expand access to care, here in Oregon. HB 2328 provides relief to communities seeking care and to qualified health care professionals who are ready, willing, and able to serve.

The ONA supports HB 2328 because it is consistent with the State's current efforts to provide high-quality, affordable health care services to all, not some, of its resident. HB 2328 is consistent Oregon's historical support of health care providers practicing at the top of their license and certification. HB 2328 moves the State one step closer to providing fully comprehensive care that meets community needs and the demands of the market, equally. We support HB 2328 and request that you support its passage, as well.