



Oregon's Voice for Long Term Care & Senior Housing

February 14, 2023

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 2600, expanding representation on the Oregon State Board of Nursing

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair Goodwin, Vice-Chair Nelson, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Oregon Health Care Association's (OHCA) members, which represent nearly 95 percent of long term care providers across the state, we urge support for House Bill (HB) 2600. OHCA's mission is to improve lives of seniors and people with disabilities by promoting quality, affordable long term care. Our members provide services and supports for 64,000 Oregonians every day either in licensed facilities or in their homes.

Registered Nurses (RNs), Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) are core to the provision of senior care. According to the Oregon Center for Nursing, in 2020 45% of Oregon's CNAs were practicing in a long term care setting, which is more than in hospitals, clinics, or any other care setting. Oregon's nursing facilities and community-based care settings rely on clinical licensed staff to ensure high quality care for residents and to comply with staffing requirements prescribed in statute and administrative rules. The needs of residents in long term care settings and the education and training requirements of nurses and other clinical licensed staff are different from those in acute care settings. Some examples include the delegation and utilization of caregivers with delegated tasks and education requirements for CNAs for different care settings.

Given the important role that nurses, and nursing assistants play in Oregon's long term care system, it is critical that they have a voice on the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN), which regulates nursing education, licensure, and practice. However, it has proven challenging to ensure that there is long term care representation on the Board. HB 2600 aims to address this challenge by requiring the Governor to strive to balance representation according to the setting in which the member practices nursing or provides care. This new requirement would join the list of existing considerations the Governor must strive to balance, which are ethnic group and geographic areas of the state.

HB 2600 does not make other changes or create new mandates to the Board's composition or the process for gubernatorial appointments. This legislation simply encourages a broader view of balanced representation and is important for enhancing quality care and addressing potential issues across the health care continuum.

Sincerely,

Libby Batlan
Senior Vice President of Government Relations
Oregon Health Care Association