

TRAVIS NELSON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
HOUSE DISTRICT 44
NORTH/NORTHEAST PORTLAND



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Testimony in Support of House Bill 2918

March 1, 2023

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair Goodwin,

For the record, I am Travis Nelson – the State Representative for House District 44 and a Registered Nurse. Committee members, I am here today in support of House Bill 2918. As stated in previous testimony, I have been working with the Oregon Health Equity Task Force on first declaring racism as a public health crisis and now addressing that crisis.

HB 4052, which I was proud to work on with former Representative Andrea Salinas in 2022, created a pilot program for a mobile health unit that would provide culturally and linguistically specific services. BIPOC people are more likely to delay critical care due to inaccessibility and mistrust of health care providers. Studies have shown that Black Americans have a shorter life expectancy by three to four-and-a-half years less than their white neighbors. Access to culturally competent primary care is critical to living longer, healthier lives.

We need to invest in this program that meets people where they are in their communities. We need to listen to our BIPOC communities who need primary care specific to their needs. Mobile health units are necessary to improve the quality of life for our rural communities as well. HB 4052 was a good start, but the \$1.2 million in funding allocated for the mobile health units was not adequate. We are asking for \$4 million in general fund for grants that OHA can administer to set up a successful pilot program.

I urge you to pass HB 2918. Thank you.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Travis Nelson".

State Representative Travis Nelson
House District 44, North/NE Portland