

Submitter: Melani Helm

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care

Measure: SB60

My name is Melani and I have been in the medical field for approximately 15 years. I was in the emergency veterinary field, have a nursing education, and have been a paramedic for almost 5 years. The scope of practice for paramedics in Oregon is broad and the expectations for level of competency are high. This leads to a great deal of pride in our profession, in our patient care, and in our pursuit of positive outcomes. We are supported in this by our various medical directors who place their faith and license in our hands daily. This is a significant responsibility which requires a great deal of intelligence and maturity to bear. The paramedicine programs take over one year to complete in themselves, and one more year of classes (or the equivalent) in order to achieve at least an Associates' degree is not an excessive expectation for this profession. I completely support trade schools for many professions. However, medicine has become so sophisticated, and the situations emergency responders deal with daily require more sophisticated cognitive and interpersonal skills which should not be compromised simply because there is a shortage of medics due to recent societal problems which were largely preventable.