



April 24, 2023

To: Senate Committee on Health Care

From: Emerson Hamlin, Political Organizer, Oregon Nurses Association

Re: Support for HB 2395 A

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). ONA is a nurses union and professional association representing over 16,000 health care workers and providers, including registered nurses, advanced practice nurses, and allied health workers. Our members work in urban and rural hospitals, clinics, school-based health centers, home health, and county health departments across Oregon.

Nurses in Oregon are on the front lines of the opioid epidemic. Oregon Health Authority's Opioid Overdose Public Health Surveillance Update from December 2022 found that the number of opioid overdose visits to emergency departments and urgent care clinics has dramatically increased since 2019. As a result, nurses in those settings frequently administer naloxone and stabilize patients experiencing overdoses. The same report found that there were 332 unintentional opioid deaths in 2022. Our members feel strongly that 322 deaths due to overdose are 332 too many, and that the state must act.

HB 2395 A will reduce the number of deaths due to opioids in Oregon by greatly increasing the availability of short-acting opioid antagonists, both by having them available in public buildings, and by having first responders distribute opioid antagonists. Furthermore, the language in the bill surrounding reporting of opioid overdose deaths will provide communities and policy makers with the information needed to continue to work towards solutions and provide communities with the resources they need. ONA urges a yes vote on HB 2395 A. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Emerson Hamlin