

I am writing in opposition to SB 703.

I've served as the program director and an instructor in Central Oregon Community College's (COCC) nursing assistant program since 2020.

I appreciate the intent of the bill- to make the CNA state written test available in Spanish, equity with other states, cultural competency) However, the solution presented in this bill does more harm than good.

- CNAs must be able to read, write, and converse in English in the health care setting, no matter their primary language. They must be able to understand orders and tasks that are delegated to them, and to communicate any concerns to the licensed nurse.
- SB 703 dictates who the vendor will be for the state test, bypassing OSBN's current RFP process and shuttering input from the program directors and instructors who are actually working with the students.
- Some of our current testing centers do not meet the proposed vendor's requirements and report that they do not have the funds to meet those requirements. Having fewer testing centers would be a hardship for students. For example, COCC serves as the main testing center for students in Central Oregon. COCC would not qualify as a testing center under the proposed vendor's requirements. Requiring students to drive two or three hours to another testing center would be a huge barrier. Many students struggle to pay the testing fees, let alone gas and lodging for out of town testing. Students also perform better in a familiar environment.
- Making the test available in Spanish disadvantages English language learner CNA students who speak other languages.

A better way to address this issue would be to incorporate desired components (e.g. written test available in other languages or tests evaluated for any cultural bias) into the upcoming RFP, and to work with the existing vendor to ensure that there is not cultural bias in their test.

I strongly urge you to vote no on SB 703

Sincerely,

*Megan Michell, COCC Nursing Assistant Program Director and*