

Date May 3, 2023

TO: The Honorable Representative Rob Nosse, Chair  
The Honorable Representative Christine Goodwin, Vice-Chair  
The Honorable Representative Travis Nelson, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

FROM: Cara Biddlecom, Deputy Director  
Public Health Division  
Oregon Health Authority

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 965A – Public Health technical fix

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, and members of the committee, I am Cara Biddlecom, Deputy Public Health Director at the Oregon Health Authority. I am here today to speak in support of Senate Bill 965A, the Oregon Health Authority's public health technical fix bill.

This bill includes clarifications of licensing investigation and certain certification processes, adds confidentiality assurances in hospice complaint investigations and adds members to Oregon's Public Health Advisory Board. These changes align with federal regulations to ensure continuation of public health services, and ease implementation of current laws. These minor changes also support a modern public health system by increasing community representation on the Oregon Public Health Advisory Board.

I will briefly list the provisions in the bill.

- Amendments to ORS chapter 441, governing nurse staffing complaint investigations clarify when off-site surveys may be conducted. This flexibility will allow programs to be more efficient with existing resources.
- Related to ORS chapter 688, licensure of hemodialysis technicians, the requested changes address long-outdated definitions and will provide proper statutory authority for conducting criminal background checks. Additionally, the bill will provide the necessary changes to allow the Authority to issue

temporary and provisional technician certificates which helps address a workforce shortage.

- SB965A adds confidentiality protections for hospice program complainants and will align hospice regulations with other community care licensed agency types that offer this protection.
- This bill updates ORS chapter 475A, the Psilocybin Services Act, to remove references to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and requirements for psilocybin training programs to submit information to ODE. The Public Health Division believes the references to ODE in the original measure and subsequently in ORS chapter 475A were unintentional drafting errors. Removing references to ODE is appropriate because ODE lacks authority to regulate psilocybin training programs and does not regulate professional training programs.
- Lastly, SB 965A adds four members to the Oregon Public Health Advisory Board, bringing Board membership to 18. The additions, which were recommended by the Board in December 2022 to be requested during this session, are necessary for the Board to achieve its goals and commitments to health equity. The members requested to be added are two community-based organization representative positions (one rural, one urban), one position for an early learning/K-12 education representative and one position for an expert in health equity.

I appreciate the committee's time this afternoon and would be happy to answer any questions.