

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Andersen and Wallan, and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Every survivor of sexual assault deserves accessible, trauma-informed, skilled medical care in the wake of experiencing this particularly unique form of victimization. Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) are specifically trained to provide this essential healthcare for anyone who may need it, and in doing so, hold a pivotal role in improving safety, justice, and healing for survivors across Oregon. **That's why I support the creation of an ongoing, dedicated state funding source for the SANE Certification Commission (SCC).**

In particular, as the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator at the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV), **I urge you to support HB 4123** to ensure access to certified SANEs for survivors of sexual assault and professional support for Oregon's SANE workforce. Funding for HB 4123 provides stable foundational funding for the management of the SCC, whose duties include overseeing competency and standards of care for the provision of sexual assault forensic exams, reviewing and certifying new and renewal certification applications, and ensuring that SANE response is coordinated with other key partners in the response to sexual assault, including advocates, law enforcement, and prosecutors. Medical forensic exams conducted by SANEs not only meet essential medical needs for survivors, but are also critical in the evidence collection process for use in investigations and prosecutions of sexual assaults when a survivor chooses to report to law enforcement.

These issues are important to me because I see firsthand the impact that a trained, trauma-informed SANE can have on a survivor. No one should ever have to suffer a sexual assault but at the very least survivors should be able to receive medical treatment from a competent, compassionate professional that can help mitigate any further harm caused by a system that is not trained to best support survivors.

Encouraging survivors to seek out medical care has a direct benefit on community and public health, as well as the survivor's own health and safety. A timely and consistent response by SANEs to sexual assault survivors is one of the most motivating factors for encouraging survivors to receive that care.

In closing, we are asking you to support survivors of sexual assault and the SANE workforce that cares for them by passing HB 4123. The current number of certified SANEs in Oregon is critically low, and investment in the SCC will support outreach and training to recruit and certify new SANEs, while also supporting the existing workforce as they respond to the ongoing crisis of sexual assault in Oregon. **An investment in the SCC is an investment in healing and survivor-centered response services across our state.**

Sincerely,

Kristen Dewey

Corvallis, Oregon