

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 an Oregon resident that has seen the impact of sexual violence on friends and community members, **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.

I believe that, as a community, we need to do more to both prevent sexual assault and to provide the highest quality of care to those who experience sexual assault. SANEs are such an important part of that community response and the work of SANEs is often emotionally difficult and conducive to vicarious trauma. SANEs, and the survivors they provide care to, deserve to have the best possible support, training, and resources available to them. The SCC, coordinated by the Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force, is in the best possible position to provide this survivor-centered, trauma-informed support but need your help in ensuring they have the capacity to do so.

In closing, I am 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,

Christopher Tate
Portland, Oregon