



February 3, 2024

House Behavioral Health & Health Care Committee
Oregon Legislature
Oregon State House
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR, 97301

RE: Endorsement for HB 4011

Dear Chairs and Members of the House Behavioral Health & Health Care Committee:

I am writing to endorse – *enthusiastically and wholeheartedly* – an initiative of the Oregon Center for Nursing (OCN) called “Retaining and Elevating the Nurse Educator Workforce” (RENEW). This well-named program seeks to stabilize and increase nursing faculty in Oregon to grow the number of new students able to attend and complete nursing programs to match escalating demand.

In 2023, HB 3396 established the RENEW program and provided funding to help grow nursing programs at the state’s public education institutions. In 2024, HB 4011 (Section 27 & 28 Nursing Educators), would expand program participation language to include nursing programs at the state’s private education institutions, which are already important partners at OCN. Of Oregon’s nursing workforce, 40.7% are graduates of private institutions, including from our BSN Degree Program at Warner Pacific University. To support associated efforts at private institutions, the OCN requests allocation of \$5 million more to RENEW.

As founding dean of a newer BSN Degree Program, which launched with the approval of the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) in spring semester 2019, I can attest to the need for requested funding. Our OSBN-capped program admits 32 students each spring and fall semester. Here are current statistics for 15 courses each semester, of which 7 have clinical rotations:

- One fulltime dean (12 credits of academic administration per semester and additional credits of teaching and clinical instruction as needed, which has ranged from 0-12 per semester)
- Three fulltime faculty (up to 12 credits of teaching and 3-6 credits of clinical administration per semester, such as advising and/or providing clinical simulation)
- Four adjunct instructors (typically 2-3 credits of teaching and 1-2 credits of clinical instruction)
- One staff member (a program manager who oversees 6 infrastructure projects, including clinical placements, course schedules, onboarding and tracking of students, contracts for clinical instructors, textbooks, and regulatory electronic document storage)
- As needed numbers of clinical instructors per semester, with a maximum of 8 students per instructor according to OSBN rule
- Graduation of 7 cohorts to date (N=169 graduates)
- Education of 4 current upper division cohorts # 8-11 (N=112 students)
- Diversity of faculty (3 men, including 2 with ethnic diversity, and 2 women with race/ethnic diversity)
- Diversity of students and graduates (currently 70% for gender, race, and/or ethnicity)



House Behavioral Health & Health Care Committee
Oregon Legislature
Page 2

In addition to this lean structure, our BSN Degree Program faces additional realities, including greater compensation and opportunities provided elsewhere in the Portland-area healthcare marketplace. As an example, our master's-prepared associate dean has 15 years of nursing experience. She has taught for us since 2019, which only hints at her worth and devotion to our mission. This year, however, an area healthcare system offered her a part-time position that pays \$50,000 more per year than her full-time faculty role. Additional funding from HB 4011 would allow us to offer a competitive salary to retain and elevate her position commensurate with its value to increasing our diverse graduates for the nursing workforce.

Moreover, turnover related to the salary gap between nurses in practice and those in academia result in bandwidth issues for those who make every effort to remain in academia. When a full-time faculty member departs, those who stay typically absorb an additional workload for an extended period because of the nationwide nurse educator shortage. HB 4011 would provide funds to honor their additional commitments.

Ultimately, extending the OCN RENEW initiative to private universities would support multiple ways to address daunting challenges. Specifically, more nursing students could attend and complete nursing programs through retention and elevation of their nurse educators in classroom, simulation, and clinical settings.

I trust you will consider these perspectives in support of professional nursing's service mandate for stewardship of holistic human health and healing. Please accept our profession's sincere appreciation for your attention to gaps and goals associated with this healing trinity for caring, safety, and leadership on behalf of recipients of care in Oregon.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Campbell".

Linda Campbell, PhD, RN, CNS, CNE
Dean and Professor, Division of Nursing



The baccalaureate degree program in nursing at Warner Pacific University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>).