

Written Testimony for HB 2948

*Submitted to the Oregon House Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare
January 28th, 2025*

Subject: Testimony in Support of House Bill 2948

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Javadi and Nelson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bethanie Wilson, and I am a registered nurse in the K-12 school setting in Oregon City, Oregon. I have been a nurse for 17 years, my entire career has been dedicated to pediatrics. I am a new school nurse this year, transitioning to this career to be more autonomous and impactful to the health of our next generation. I am writing to express my strong support for **HB 2948**, which ensures that only a registered nurse may supervise a nurse in a school setting concerning nursing practice.

As a school nurse, I play a critical role in ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of students with diverse medical needs. The complexity of my work requires adherence to professional nursing standards and clinical judgment. **HB 2948 recognizes the importance of having qualified supervision specific to nursing practice.** This distinction is essential for the following reasons:

1. Clinical Expertise and Patient Safety

Nursing practice includes performing assessments, developing care plans, and managing medical emergencies. These tasks require clinical expertise that can only be effectively evaluated and supervised by another registered nurse. An administrator or non-nursing supervisor may not have the medical knowledge necessary to provide meaningful oversight in these areas. Allowing registered nurses to supervise school nurses ensures that clinical practices align with the Oregon Nurse Practice Act (ORS 678.010).

- 2. Clear Distinction Between Nursing and Administrative Functions** HB 2948 clarifies the boundaries between clinical and non-clinical supervision. Administrators are vital to supporting the broader functions of a school nurse, such as scheduling and policy adherence. However, when it comes to decisions about patient care, only a registered nurse possesses the training to provide appropriate guidance and evaluation. This bill ensures that nurses are not placed in compromising situations where individuals evaluate their clinical judgment without a medical background.

3. Support for Professional Growth and Accountability

Registered nurses are uniquely qualified to mentor and guide other nurses in clinical settings, fostering professional growth while maintaining accountability. HB 2948 creates a structure that empowers school nurses to perform their duties effectively, knowing they

are supported by peers who understand the profession's nuances.

4. Alignment with Best Practices in Healthcare

Healthcare settings outside of schools consistently rely on registered nurses to supervise other nurses. Extending this standard to the school environment ensures that Oregon students receive high-quality nursing care and that the nurses providing this care are supported by appropriate clinical oversight.

Personal Story:

Non-medical supervisors and administrators dictating nursing practice is the classic case of not knowing what you don't know, and it is dangerous. Nurses are the experts, we are the critical thinkers. We are knowledgeable in and committed to safe, equitable nursing practice.

We are duty-bound to our licensure and the Nurse Practice Act. The more nurses that are supported in our schools, the more we can do for our schools and students.

In conclusion, HB 2948 provides critical safeguards for students and school nurses by ensuring clinical supervision is conducted by those with the appropriate training and expertise. I urge you to support this bill and help Oregon schools continue to provide safe, effective, and professional nursing care to our students.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Respectfully,

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