

Submitter: Carrie Tierney
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2948
Subject: Testimony in Support of House Bill 2948

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

My name is Carrie Tierney, and I am a registered nurse in the K-12 school setting in Milwaukie, Oregon, with 12 years of nursing experience, including 9 years in school nursing. I strongly support HB 2948, which ensures only a registered nurse may supervise school nurses in matters of nursing practice.

As a school nurse, I ensure the health and safety of students with diverse medical needs. This work demands adherence to professional standards and clinical judgment. HB 2948 is vital for ensuring qualified supervision specific to nursing practice.

Key Reasons for Supporting HB 2948:

Clinical Expertise and Patient Safety

School nursing involves assessments, care plans, and emergency management that require clinical expertise. Effective supervision of these practices can only be provided by another registered nurse with knowledge of the Oregon Nurse Practice Act (ORS 678.010).

Separation of Clinical and Administrative Roles

While administrators support broader functions like scheduling and policy adherence, they lack the medical background to evaluate clinical judgment. This bill protects nurses from being evaluated on medical decisions by those without the necessary expertise.

Professional Growth and Accountability

Registered nurse supervision fosters mentorship, accountability, and professional growth, enabling school nurses to perform their roles with confidence and clinical support.

Alignment with Healthcare Best Practices

In healthcare, nurses are always supervised by other nurses. Extending this standard to schools ensures students receive high-quality care under appropriate clinical oversight.

Personal Perspective:

In my career, I've witnessed the dangers of non-medical supervisors influencing nursing practice. Nurses are critical thinkers with the expertise to ensure student safety and equitable care. Thankfully, my administration has deferred to our clinical judgment, taking corrective action when needed. However, I wouldn't work in a district where nurses were unsupported, or student safety compromised due to uninformed decisions by non-medical staff. Nurses must uphold the Nurse Practice Act and prioritize student safety above all else.

By supporting HB 2948, you provide safeguards for students and ensure that school nurses have the proper clinical supervision to uphold safe, effective care. I urge you to support this bill to maintain high standards of nursing practice in Oregon schools.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I am happy to answer questions or share further insights.

Respectfully,

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