

OREGON ATTORNEY GENERAL'S SEXUAL ASSAULT TASK FORCE



SUPPORT HB 3070 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY FEBRUARY 6, 2025

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

Thank you for your time and consideration of HB 3070. On behalf of the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force (Oregon SATF), I am pleased to submit testimony in support of HB 3070, which appropriates funding for the management of the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Certification Commission.

At Oregon SATF, our mission is to facilitate and support a collaborative, survivor-centered approach to the prevention of and response to violence and abuse in Oregon. Our organization was founded 26 years ago because of the recognition that sexual violence is a unique form of trauma that requires specialized skill sets and knowledge to address, while also being an issue that our communities are resistant to talk about. Sexual violence thrives in silence and in isolation.

While we have made tremendous progress in increasing visibility, awareness, and resources about the issue, it is also true that survivors of sexual assault continue to experience difficulty accessing the resources that they need to heal from the trauma they experience. This is particularly true when it comes to the immediate aftermath of sexual assault and the need for compassionate, skilled, readily available medical forensic care.

Medical forensic care is highly specialized and is provided most effectively by nurses and other healthcare practitioners who voluntarily engage in specific training to understand the dynamics of trauma, best practice for conducting an extremely sensitive exam, and proper evidence collection that can be used for sexual assault investigation and prosecution.

Established in OAR 137-084-0500, the SANE Certification Commission (SCC) is managed by Oregon SATF, to ensure that healthcare professionals providing sexual assault medical forensic examinations in Oregon possess the necessary training and qualifications to deliver the best standards of medical forensic care to victims of sexual assault. Despite its importance, the SCC has been un- or under-funded since its inception, resulting in limited capacity and resources to fulfill its mandated duties.

Across Oregon, survivors of sexual assault lack sufficient access to the medical forensic care, as the SANE workforce has struggled to meet the needs. Rural areas, in particular, are often SANE "deserts", where no certified SANEs live or reside for hundreds of miles. Currently, the SANE certification database that the SCC manages shows that there are 17 counties within our state that have no certified SANEs within them at all. At Oregon SATF, we regularly hear examples of the precarious situations this puts survivors in - often leaving them with no appropriate care available, or inconceivable option of being told they must find transportation, time, and resources to travel hours on a highway to the nearest available SANE. This is unacceptable, and we can do better.

Approving funding for the SCC through HB 3070 will allow resources to expand outreach for SANE recruitment, training, workforce support, and ongoing professional development in order to bolster the SANE workforce and better meet the needs of survivors of sexual assault in their most vulnerable moments. **I urge you to vote yes on HB 3070 and to establish a source of funding from the state each biennium for this critical work.**

Thank you again for your time and consideration. I welcome any opportunity to answer questions or share more about this work with you.

Sincerely,



Shannon Rose
Executive Director
Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force

Support HB 3070:



Sexual Assault Survivors Deserve Swift Access to Quality Medical Forensic Care

Survivors of sexual assault have a right to access Sexual Assault Forensic Exams (SAFEs). **SAFEs provide skilled, trauma-informed compassionate medical forensic care, as well as a pathway to pursue justice through criminal and civil court systems via sensitive and deliberate evidence collection.** SAFEs are provided by specially trained Sexual Assault Examiners/Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SAEs/SANEs).

The SANE Certification Commission (SCC) is a public body, designated in statute to be managed by the Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force (SATF).

Key responsibilities of the SCC include:

- setting competency and certification standards to ensure delivery of the best standards of care to sexual assault survivors ,
- reviewing and processing new and renewal certification applications,
- identifying and sharing best practices for sexual assault medical care, and,
- and overseeing SANE/SAE adherence to quality care across the state.

\$400k

Biennium investment

Unstable and inconsistent funding for the SCC has impeded progress in building a robust and sustainable workforce of certified SAEs/SANEs, especially in Oregon's rural communities. A \$400k biennium investment, directed to Oregon SATF for the ongoing management of the SCC, is needed.

17

Oregon counties with no certified SAEs/SANEs at all

Currently, 17 out of 36 counties have no certified SAEs/SANEs, leaving large swaths of the state underserved. Across all rural and frontier counties, there are only 14 certified SANEs available to serve over 1.4 million residents, representing 33% of Oregon's population.



Studies consistently show that survivors have improved outcomes when post-assault care is provided by a certified SAE/SANE. This includes outcomes for health, well-being, as well as for successful investigations and prosecutions.

"Our vision is a future where every survivor in Oregon has access to the trauma-informed, quality medical care they deserve, no matter where they are located." - Mei Pomegranate, Oregon SATF SANE/SAE Coordinator

Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force / SANE Certification Commission

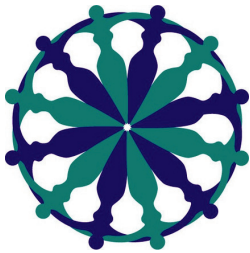
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Support HB 3070



Sexual Assault Survivors Deserve Swift Access to Quality Medical Forensic Care

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