

Submitter: Rachel Schutz
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3070

Dear Members of the Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 3070, a critical piece of legislation that will provide much-needed funding for the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Certification Commission (SCC) in Oregon. Ensuring that survivors of sexual assault have access to skilled, trauma-informed, and compassionate medical forensic care is not just a necessity—it is a fundamental right.

Sexual Assault Forensic Exams (SAFEs) are essential in providing survivors with the medical care they need while also preserving evidence that can aid in pursuing justice through the legal system. These exams are conducted by highly trained Sexual Assault Examiners and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SAEs/SANEs), professionals whose specialized skills ensure survivors receive quality care with dignity and respect.

The SCC, managed by the Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force (SATF), plays a pivotal role in:

- Establishing competency and certification standards to uphold the highest level of care for survivors.
- Reviewing and processing certification applications to grow and sustain a workforce of qualified SAEs/SANEs.
- Identifying and promoting best practices in sexual assault medical care.
- Overseeing the adherence of SAEs/SANEs to quality care standards across Oregon.

Currently, the lack of stable and consistent funding for the SCC has resulted in significant service gaps, particularly in rural and frontier counties. Alarmingly, 17 out of Oregon's 36 counties have no certified SAEs/SANEs, leaving vast areas of the state without access to this critical service. In rural and frontier communities alone, only 14 certified SANEs serve a population of over 1.4 million residents—more than 33% of Oregon's total population.

This disparity underscores the urgent need for the proposed \$400,000 biennium investment in HB 3070. This funding will allow Oregon SATF to continue managing the SCC effectively, ensuring a sustainable workforce of certified SAEs/SANEs throughout the state. Research consistently demonstrates that survivors have better health outcomes, improved well-being, and increased chances of justice when they receive post-assault care from certified professionals.

As the Executive Director of the Family Justice Center of Washington County, I firmly believe that every survivor in Oregon deserves access to trauma-informed, high-quality medical care, regardless of their geographic location. By passing HB 3070, the legislature can take a vital step toward achieving this vision and ensuring that no survivor is left without the care they need.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rachel Schutz, Executive Director
Family Justice Center of Washington County