

**Providence Health & Services**  
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February 6, 2025

The Honorable Jason Kropf  
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2456 – Sexual Assault Victims’ Emergency Medical Response Fund

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Providence Health & Services, thank you for the opportunity to voice our strong support for House Bill 2456, which will simplify access to the Sexual Assault Victim’s Emergency Medical Response Fund for survivors of sexual assault. At a time when a person is most vulnerable, Providence believes easing the restrictions on financial support for a survivor is compassionate and just.

As Oregon’s largest health care provider, Providence cares for many of Oregon’s underserved and vulnerable populations, including those impacted by sexual assault. In addition to eight emergency departments, Providence operates a S.A.F.E. Center, providing comprehensive, trauma-informed medical care to individuals who have experienced sexual, physical or psychological violence. In 2024 alone, we cared for more than 750 patients affected by sexual or domestic violence across our ministries.

HB 2456 will make two important changes that will ease the way of survivors of sexual assault. First, it broadens the definition of “medical assessment”. This change will benefit patients as well as our ability to provide these critical examinations. Second, the bill expands the ability of survivors to access the Sexual Assault Victim’s Emergency Medical Response Fund to pay for a forensic examination and related expenses. Taken together, these changes create a clearer pathway for a survivor to heal.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. We hope you will join us in support of HB 2456.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristine Bell".

Kristine Bell, RN  
Executive Director, Women and Children’s Services  
Providence Oregon