



Support House Bill 3070
House Judiciary Committee
February 5th, 2025

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

Survivors of sexual assault deserve compassionate, skilled, and trauma-informed medical care that is easily accessible in the wake of experiencing this particularly unique form of victimization. Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) are trained to provide this essential care for anyone who needs it. SANEs hold a vital role in improving safety, justice, and healing for survivors across Oregon. **I support the creation of ongoing, dedicated state funding for the SANE Certification Commission (SCC).**

As a former Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworker for the State of Oregon, and current Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Oregon (PCA Oregon), I urge you to support HB 3070 to ensure access to certified SANEs for survivors of sexual assault and professional support for Oregon's SANE workforce. Funding for HB 3070 provides stable foundational funding for the management of the SCC, whose duties include:

- Overseeing competency and standards of care for the provision of sexual assault forensic exams,
- Reviewing and certifying new and renewal certification applications, and
- Ensuring SANE response is coordinated with other key partners in the response to sexual assault, including advocates, law enforcement, and prosecutors.

Medical forensic exams conducted by SANEs not only meet essential medical needs for survivors, but are also critical in the evidence collection process for use in investigations and prosecutions of sexual assaults when a survivor chooses to report to law enforcement.

These issues are important to PCA Oregon because we believe investments in survivor-centered responses are critical to preventing further violence and abuse in our communities and are critical to helping survivors heal from trauma. Studies show survivors have improved outcomes when post-assault care is provided by a certified SAE/SANE, including outcomes for health, wellbeing, and successful investigations and prosecutions.

Currently, 17 out of 36 counties in Oregon have no certified SAEs/SANEs, leaving large swaths of the state underserved. I think back to my days as a CPS worker when I was assigned to support a family after child sexual abuse had occurred. In these instances, CPS workers access

Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) to provide medical and forensic examinations/interviews to understand the full scope and impact of the abuse. While these programs are a critical part of how we respond to child sex abuse in Oregon, there were times when I needed to access these supports outside of CAC business hours (for example, in the middle of the night). SANEs - in particular, SANEs trained in pediatric care - are critical in ensuring there is always someone available to kids and families who is trained in how to respond with a trauma-informed, person-centered approach to avoid further harm.

In closing, I urge you to support survivors of sexual assault and the SANE workforce that cares for them by passing HB 3070. The current number of certified SANEs in Oregon is critically low, and investment in the SCC will support outreach and training to recruit and certify new SANEs, while also supporting the existing workforce as they respond to the ongoing crisis of sexual assault in Oregon. **An investment in the SCC is an investment in healing and survivor-centered response services across our state.**

Sincerely,

Nicole Cunningham
Executive Director
Prevent Child Abuse Oregon