

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

Every survivor of sexual assault deserves accessible, trauma-informed, skilled medical care in the wake of experiencing this particularly unique form of victimization. Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) are specifically trained to provide this essential healthcare for anyone who may need it, and in doing so, hold a pivotal role in improving safety, justice, and healing for survivors across Oregon.

That's why I support the creation of an ongoing, dedicated state funding source for the SANE Certification Commission (SCC).

In particular, as a SANE of Sarah's Place-Samaritan Health Services, 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 that 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 me because ensuring that professionals are well-trained and that resources are available to support survivors, It sends a message that society takes sexual assault seriously and values the dignity and well-being of survivors. Sexual assault victims are often in shock, scared, and confused, and the healthcare system can be overwhelming. I have seen patient-provider relationships where there was no hiding the providers personal discomfort and biases related to the topic of rape and sexual assault. It's difficult to create the right environment or setting to make patients comfortable talking about sexual assault. The SANE nurse's role is to make the process more comfortable and dignified as possible. SANE nurses are trained to understand the psychological and physical impacts of trauma. This

allows them to provide care in a way that minimizes re-traumatization. This approach is sensitive, compassionate, and focused on the victim's needs, creating the environment where the person feels safe and heard.

In closing, we are asking 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,

Tasha

Albany, Oregon