

Submitter: Theresa Muncy
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3070

My name is Theresa Muncy. I am Lead Forensic Nurse Examiner for a large healthcare organization in the Portland-metro area and I've been a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE), since 2018. I am also the Chair of Oregon's SANE Certification Commission (SCC). A year ago, I began offering one-on-one meetings for candidates needing extra support, which enabled me to meet SANEs from all over the state and learn about their individual experiences and barriers.

Oregon SANEs come from diverse nursing backgrounds. We work for hospital systems, standalone clinics, private businesses, and county SARTS. Some of us do this work full-time, seeing several patients a week. Most do it on-call while also working other nursing jobs. Some in smaller communities might only care for a few patients the entire year. We can't change these variables but we can build the infrastructure needed to operate as a cohesive, specialized profession.

SANEs need accessible, regular continuing education and support, so we retain our experienced nurses, who can then recruit and train new SANEs. The SCC, while a very passionate group of appointed volunteers, lacks resources for outreach and oversight to make sure everyone upholds the high standard that every survivor deserves.

I invite you to picture an individual with me: She is an Oregonian. She's one of your constituents. She's had a normal, busy week of work. Last night she went on a date with someone she really liked and thought she could trust. Someone who, late last night, violated her trust and safety by sexually assaulting her.

This morning, she woke up exhausted, afraid and unsure of what to do next. Today, maybe tomorrow, she'll gather the energy to go to a hospital and speak the words she never thought she'd have to say.

A short while later, she'll meet an Oregon-certified SANE.

She'll learn that her exam will be tailored to her needs and she gets to choose what happens next, because her SANE values informed consent above all.

She'll get to take as much time as she needs to recount the violence she experienced, because her SANE is an expert in trauma-informed care.

She'll meet an advocate who will be her partner in safety and community resources,

because her SANE knows she has a right to one by law.

She'll learn she only has to talk to the police if she wants to, because her SANE will take time to teach her about anonymous and reporting kits.

She'll be offered medications to prevent long-term health consequences like STIs, HIV and pregnancy, because her SANE is well-versed in best practice protocols.

And all of this care will be financially covered, because her SANE will help her fill out an Oregon SAVE fund application and submit it that night.

She'll leave the hospital feeling safer in her body than when she arrived. Her SANE will stay behind for hours to complete 20 pages of documentation, hand-draw injuries, upload photos, package evidence, and ultimately transfer her kit securely to police.

In the months and years to come, when this patient reaches point Z of this unwanted path, point A will likely be a distant memory. She probably won't remember her SANE's name.

But she'll remember that her request for help was answered swiftly and competently. She'll feel confident that her SANE had the knowledge and skills to give justice a fighting chance.

And she'll recognize that Oregon values survivors enough to invest in the nurses doing this work.

This is, in my opinion, the only acceptable outcome to this scenario, and the one we must ensure for every survivor, at every encounter, in every facility in our state. It won't happen overnight. It will take a dedicated, multi-disciplinary effort over time, involving education, outreach and oversight. It will take each of you sharing in our vision to make Oregon a leader in care of sexual assault survivors.

It will take your support for House Bill 3070.

Thank you for your time and consideration.