



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 the director of Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (OCADSV), 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.

OCADSV is a coalition of 54 members programs who provide community-based domestic and sexual violence services throughout the state. For almost every one of our programs this includes 24-hour crisis response to hospitals to provide advocacy

to survivors of sexual assault as they navigate the aftermath of an assault including SANE exams. SANE nurses are an integral part of this process. They partner with advocates to provide trauma informed medical responses, support navigating systems, and oversee sound evidence collection for future court cases.

We have seen the effects in recent years of a waning SANE work force across the state – particularly in rural and frontier communities. For example, one of our member programs recently relayed that they had to drive a survivor three hours from their rural community into a larger urban community to bring them in for a SANE exam because their local hospital has no SANE nurses. The average wait in this urban hospital to be seen once they arrived was 2-3 hours. The exams can take up to 3-4 hours themselves and the survivor would also have to drive back 3 hours to their community with an advocate – the length of the travel and wait required the program to send another advocate to the hospital to tap out their co-worker when they reached the end of their budgeted hours for the week. In total this one exam took up to 12 hours to complete – a half a day. A stable and funded source for SANE certification and coordination will help to address this undue burden for our member programs and the survivors they serve.

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,

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