



***Oregon's Voice for Long Term Care & Senior Housing***

February 11, 2025

Senate Committee on Health Care  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: *OHCA Supports the Oregon Wellness Program, Fully Fund SB 531***

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee,

Oregon Health Care Association (OHCA) represents more than 90 percent of long term care providers across the state. Our members include nursing facilities/post-acute care, assisted living, residential care, and memory care communities, as well as in-home care agencies. We are committed to serving older adults and people with disabilities in need of long term services and supports, as well as those caregivers and clinical staff who care for them.

We support the Oregon Wellness Program (OWP) and the promise it has delivered licensed health care professionals since 2018. OWP is a resource utilized by licensed CNAs, LPNs, RNs, and other licensed clinical staff who work in long term care settings for mental health counseling support. It is imperative that these health care professionals have a place (and someone) they can turn to when the weight of this human-centric career they so bravely serve feels too heavy, or if they simply need extra support to continue their mission.

Last year, the OWP was able to offer three therapy sessions to health care workers across the care continuum. In the past, these same workers had been able to receive eight sessions with a trusted therapist. We respectfully urge you to support an investment of \$1.6 million to ensure our health care professionals can utilize and receive the immense benefits from simply having someone in their corner, eight times a year at no cost to them. OHCA knows the hard work and dedication that goes into caring for older adults every day and we remain committed to encouraging and supporting this critical and in demand workforce.

Thank you for your consideration to fully fund SB 531 this biennium, we are proud to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Meredith Coba  
Director of Legislative and Political Affairs  
Oregon Health Care Association