



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

## Medical Board

1500 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Suite 620

Portland, OR 97201-5847

(971) 673-2700

FAX (971) 673-2669

[www.oregon.gov/omb](http://www.oregon.gov/omb)

## **INFORMATIONAL TESTIMONY SENATE BILL 531**

### **Senate Committee On Health Care February 11, 2025**

Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden and Members of the Health Care Committee,

SB 531 would provide \$1,600,000 general fund dollars each biennium to the Oregon Wellness Program – a nonprofit organization supporting the well-being of Oregon’s licensed health care professionals (physicians, PAs, nurses, dentists, etc.) with free, confidential mental and behavioral health counseling statewide. The Wellness Program aims to address the high rate of burnout and attrition among health care providers, directly impacting the overall health care workforce and ability for patients to access medical care. In 2024, the Wellness Program reportedly provided services to 332 health care providers licensed by the OMB.

The Oregon Medical Board shares the goals of the Wellness Program and is actively working to destigmatize mental health care. In 2017, the Board began dedicating a portion of licensing fees to the Wellness Program, and in 2023, the Board removed intrusive mental, behavioral, and physical health questions from application and renewal forms. The Board has been recognized as a Wellbeing First for Healthcare Champion by the Dr. Lorna Breen Foundation since 2023.

The Oregon Medical Board recognizes that licensees encounter health conditions, including those involving mental health and substance use disorders, just as their patients and fellow health care providers do. The Board expects its licensees to address their health concerns and ensure patient safety. The Oregon Wellness Program is one program utilized by licensees to meet this expectation.

Nicole Krishnaswami, Executive Director  
Oregon Medical Board

*The mission of the Oregon Medical Board is to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of Oregonians by regulating the practice of medicine in a manner that promotes access to quality care.*