

Submitter: Cari Moodie
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB529

Dear Senator Patterson,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Senate Bill 529, which you have sponsored to strengthen Oregon's healthcare system by integrating traditional health workers and community health registered nurses (CHRN)s—including faith community nurses into Oregon's coordinated care framework. As a faith community nurse and healthcare advocate, I see this legislation as a transformative step toward improving health equity, particularly for underserved populations across Oregon.

Senate Bill 529's directive to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and coordinated care organizations (CCOs) to contract directly with CHRN)s and establish comprehensive billing codes is a game-changer for faith community nursing. Defined in the bill as registered nurses providing patient care outside traditional healthcare facilities, CHRN)s align perfectly with the mission of faith community nurses who deliver whole person health services. By recognizing and funding these roles, SB 529 ensures that nurses embedded in faith communities and community organizations, can continue their vital work, reaching individuals who might otherwise fall through the cracks of our healthcare system.

In my experience faith community nurses have proven their value time and again. These nurses are trusted figures who address both immediate health needs and long-term wellness, often in rural or low-income areas where access to care is limited. SB 529's provisions—such as direct contracts with CHRN)s and the removal of supervision requirements—empower these professionals to operate efficiently and flexibly, meeting the unique needs of Oregon's diverse communities.

Moreover, the bill's emphasis on federal financial participation and comprehensive billing codes, ensures sustainability for faith community nursing programs. This funding mechanism will allow congregations to expand services like health education, preventive care, and mental health support without relying solely on limited faith community budgets. The requirement for CCOs to reimburse CHRN)s using fee-for-service rates or alternative payment methodologies further guarantees that these nurses are fairly compensated, supporting retention and professional growth at a time when Oregon faces nursing shortages.

SB 529 also reflects Oregon's commitment to culturally responsive care. Faith community nurses often serve populations with deep ties to specific cultural or

spiritual traditions, and the bill's support for access to culturally specific health workers amplifies their ability to provide tailored, compassionate care.

I urge you and your colleagues in the Oregon State Senate to pass Senate Bill 529 and invest in the future of community health through faith community nursing. This bill is a bold, practical solution that will enhance healthcare access, reduce disparities, and strengthen our state's resilience. I would be honored to provide additional insights or testimony to support its advancement. Please feel free to contact me at cari_baily@yahoo.com.

Thank you for your leadership in championing this critical legislation.

Sincerely,
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