

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

I have served as a school nurse at a PPS high school for over 30 years, and I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB2423, which aims to establish the School-Based Health Professionals Taskforce. This taskforce will ensure that licensing board rules accurately reflect the unique realities of working in school settings.

Schools are a very distinct environment for any health professional, and the intricacies of school policies are not typically covered in nursing school. The learning and understanding of these policies primarily happen on the job, making licensing rules critically important. As a school nurse, I work with a vast majority of educators, not healthcare providers, and often, I am the only healthcare professional in the school. This level of autonomy means that it is vital for the licensing rules and regulations to be tailored to the specific demands of our role.

With this in mind, it is essential that we have licensing rules that reflect the unique nature of our work in schools. As it stands, many regulations do not align with the realities we face daily. I urge you to support HB2423 to ensure that Oregon's licensing boards can create clear, appropriate guidelines for school-based health professionals, which will, in turn, improve both professional retention and student access to essential health services.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Mary Johnson, RN, MN

Multnomah ESD School Nurse