



Testimony for the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare

Regarding HB 3902

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Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Nelson and Javadi, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 3902, a bill that would convene two advisory committees to address urgent issues in Oregon's nursing workforce—specifically, the stability of the overall workforce and the critical staffing shortage within nursing education.

As I shared with this committee in December, Oregon has more licensed nurses than ever before. But at the same time, we are seeing record levels of unfilled positions across care settings. This vacancy crisis isn't about a lack of nurses—it's about a mismatch between where nurses are, where they're willing and able to work, and the conditions that support them to stay.

Oregon has built a national reputation for leadership in nursing workforce research and policy, thanks in part to this Legislature's commitment to healthcare access and sustainability. That leadership has never been more important. Educational programs are turning away qualified applicants. Employers are struggling to fill critical roles despite the overall number of nurses licensed to practice in Oregon. These pressures are especially pronounced in rural and underserved areas.

Over the past few years, the Legislature responded with HB 4003 and HB 3396. HB 3902 builds on that momentum. It's a practical step to align and coordinate efforts—so we can shift from reacting to long-standing problems to planning for long-term solutions.

I understand that some may ask, "Why another task force?" But this isn't a duplication—it's an opportunity. By bringing together stakeholders through OSBN and the Oregon Center for Nursing, Oregon can move from fragmented responses to cohesive strategies. With a clear charge and timeline, these advisory groups can produce concrete recommendations for faculty development, improved workforce distribution, and equitable access to nursing care statewide.

I urge your support for HB 3902. It's a focused and timely investment in the systems that support nurses, educators, and ultimately, the health of Oregonians.