



# SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

Oregon State Legislature  
State Capitol  
Salem, OR

## NEWS RELEASE

February 15, 2016

CONTACT: Rick Osborn (503) 986-1074  
[rick.osborn@state.or.us](mailto:rick.osborn@state.or.us)

### **Oregon Senate passes bill to protect student privacy**

*SB 1558 makes health records property of students on college and university campuses*

SALEM – The Oregon Senate Democrats took action today to protect the rights of university and college students regarding medical, mental health and counseling records.

Senate Bill 1558, passed by a 28-0 vote this morning, prohibits disclosure of health, mental health and counseling records by colleges and universities under most circumstances. The bill protects a student's right to confidentiality when seeking services from campus-based health and counseling centers, by ensuring that those records are not disclosed to other offices of a college or university, or any other entity, except in appropriate circumstances.

"Students have a right to medical privacy, and shouldn't be forced to give up that right to privacy when they walk through the doors of a campus health or counseling clinic," said chief sponsor Sen. Sara Gelsler (D-Corvallis). "This bill makes student medical privacy rights explicit, and will give students the confidence they need to seek essential physical and mental health care services when and where they need them most."

The bill clarifies that medical records are not student records and belong to the students; not the institutions they attend. This privacy protection is critical for any student, and especially meaningful for students experiencing abuse, trauma or crisis who turn to their campus-based health centers for support. Senate Bill 1558 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

###