



OREGON SENATE DEMOCRATS

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Senate Democrats Improve Public Health Emergency Response

Senate Bill 1529 will enable rapid response, agency action during health care emergency

SALEM – Today, the Senate approved Senate Bill 1529 on a vote of 18 to 7. This bill streamlines emergency management practices and improves agency response to public health emergencies.

“In case of a public health emergency, Oregonians deserve a clear, coordinated response from our state’s leadership,” said Senator Deb Patterson (D-Salem), Chair of the Senate Committee on Health Care. “Currently, we rely on the Governor to declare a public health emergency to deploy licensed health care volunteers to respond in times of crisis. Senate Bill 1529 will allow for the Oregon Health Authority to provide an immediate, direct response by activating health care volunteers during emergency situations.”

“We have a duty to best prepare Oregon for future public health emergencies” said Senator James Manning (D-Eugene), who Chair of the Senate Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness. “We are deeply grateful for the dedicated, licensed health care providers that are willing to volunteer to protect their communities in times of crisis. Senate Bill 1529 will provide coverage for volunteers if they are injured while serving our state. This measure will allow Oregon to be more responsive, save lives and better support our frontline health care volunteers.”

SB 1529 also allows the Oregon Health Authority to declare a health care emergency and to deploy SERV-OR volunteers. The State Emergency Registry of Volunteers in Oregon (SERV-OR) is a database of health care professionals, including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), behavioral health providers, respiratory therapists and others who serve in response to emergencies. Providers who are licensed in another state may practice in Oregon upon declaration of an emergency.

Senate Bill 1529 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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