



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Senate approves equal payments for health practitioners

HB 2902B enhances Oregon's health care workforce, improves access to affordable, preventative care

SALEM—The Oregon Senate this morning approved a bill to give nurse practitioners and physician assistants pay equity with physicians. House Bill 2902B, which requires that equal reimbursement be provided to primary health care providers for mental health and primary care services, passed on a vote of 27-2 with one excused.

“The need for primary care is just getting more urgent with Oregon’s aging population, and it’s critical for us to attract the workforce we need to meet that demand,” said Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham), who is a retired public health nurse and chair of the Senate Committee on Health Care and Human Services. “We can make Oregon an attractive place for primary care providers by showing that we value equal pay for practitioners who do equal work.”

House Bill 2902B requires private health care insurance companies to reimburse nurse practitioners and physician assistants the same rate when providing identical mental health and primary care services.

“It’s a matter of fairness. Two nurse practitioners or physician assistants who have the training, ability, and scope to do the same procedure should receive equal payment and benefits for the work done,” said Senator Alan Bates (D-Medford), who is a family physician. “This bill helps boost our health care workforce so that we can provide greater access to affordable, preventative care.”

In the Senate, HB 2902B was amended to include a task force that will take a broader look at compensation within the health professions and report back to the legislature in 2014.

House Bill 2902B will now return to the Oregon House of Representatives for a concurrence motion.

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