



Northwest Kidney Council
438 1st Street
Lake Oswego, OR 97034

Washington Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care
RE: Support for SB 5228

Jan. 24, 2025

Chair Cleveland, members of the committee,

On behalf of the Northwest Kidney Council, thank you for the opportunity to provide supportive testimony for SB 5228, which would expand the Council on Health Disparities and rename it to the Council for Health Justice and Equity.

Our organization partners with patient advocates, health care professionals, care providers and researchers to advance kidney care in both Washington and Oregon. Together we are committed to ensuring that all patients with kidney disease receive high quality care and that treatment is accessible to all.

This legislation is a vital step toward addressing systemic inequities in our healthcare system and ensuring that all Washingtonians, including those living with chronic conditions like kidney disease, have access to equitable care.

Kidney patients are uniquely impacted by health disparities. Communities of color, individuals with low incomes, and rural residents are disproportionately affected by kidney disease due to inequities in access to preventive care, early diagnosis, and treatment. Expanding the scope of the Council would provide the necessary resources and focus to address these disparities while renaming it to reflect a stronger and more proactive commitment to health justice. This evolution is critical to ensuring that historically underserved populations are represented in decision-making and that their unique healthcare challenges are acknowledged and addressed.

Renaming the Council to emphasize health justice and equity sends a powerful message that Washington is committed to creating a healthcare system where outcomes are no longer determined by race, income, or geography.

For kidney patients, this means advocating for equitable access to dialysis, transplantation, and preventive care. The Northwest Kidney Council strongly supports this legislation and urges its passage as a meaningful step toward addressing long-standing inequities. Thank you for your leadership on this issue and for considering our testimony.

Sincerely,

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