



**Testimony in Support of HB 2684-A**

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Oregon Nurses Association

Chair Dembrow and Members of the Senate Workforce Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2684-A, which is an important tool in addressing the nursing faculty shortage. This legislation extends the sunset on allowing PERS retirees to be employed full time as nursing instructors by a public employer. In 2007, the legislature passed SB 4, which included this exemption to the PERS 1040 hour rule.

Oregon is expected to face a nursing shortage in the future. The most recent projections from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) suggest that by 2025, Oregon can anticipate a nursing shortage of 6,000 nurses.

Having a robust nursing faculty workforce is critical to ensuring that Oregon is educating the needed nursing workforce for the future, and unfortunately a shortage of nursing faculty continues to be a problem. The high costs of graduate nursing education coupled with the relatively low salaries of nursing faculty make it difficult to build and retain the needed workforce. As faculty retire, vacancies are often longstanding, and potentially impact the number of nursing students who can enroll.

A 2011 report published by the Oregon Center for Nursing that focused on nursing faculty found that one-fourth of nurses currently working as educators in Oregon planned to retire in the next 5 years, with another fourth planning to retire in 6-10 years.

This legislation would encourage retired nursing instructors to continue to teach, preserving limited capacity in nursing education programs.

ONA urges your support of HB 2684-A.