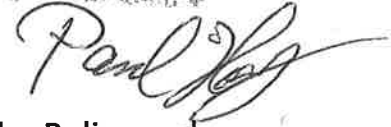


AFSCME Urges your support of HB 2618



HB 2618 adds the employees of the Stabilization and Crisis Unit to the Police and Fire section of PERS allowing them to retire after 25 years of work. The bill has received broad support and passed unanimously out of House Business and Labor and Ways and Means Human Services Subcommittee and received bi-partisan support in the full Joint Ways and Means Committee. AFSCME is grateful for this broad support.

Background:

Most of the clients in the Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU) have a co-existing psychiatric disorder that makes their needs for behavioral supports more intense. The SACU homes are a last resort placement where clients who are in crisis are sent from private group homes, families and law enforcement.

In 1994, the Oregon Court of Appeals deemed the work of the state-operated group homes as the equivalent to “guards at a mental hospital” and strike prohibited, just like other job classifications who receive the P&F PERS. While calling SACU employees “guards” is certainly an outdated term for the work done, they are responsible for the health and safety of the clients in their care.

Providing supports for the Stabilization and Crisis Unit clients is both physically and emotionally draining. In addition to providing day to day care, it also means that when a client is experiencing behavioral issues that could cause harm to themselves or others, staff must intervene. Injuries are common, sometimes bad enough to receive medical attention and counseling. As we all know, as we age, it becomes more difficult to recover from injuries, even smaller ones.

Please vote YES on HB 2618 and allow the staff of the Stabilization and Crisis Unit the retirement they deserve.

