



February 1, 2016

Chair Paul Holvey
House Business and Labor Committee
900 Court St. - State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Holvey and members of the Committee:

My name is Aubryn Ouska. I work in admission in the Oregon State Hospital and I am here to testify in support of HB 4011.

I came to this work and continue to do this work because I love helping people. My colleagues and I all love working with our patients so they can live a full life. I for one can relate to some of our patients. They are people just like you and I, they just need a little extra help to achieve their full potential.

Although I love my job, it comes with risk and stress. I work in the most secure portion of the hospital on an admissions unit. My unit serves patients that are some of the most unpredictable, vulnerable, and dangerous people in the state of Oregon. In November and December I had to go to the emergency room three times due to being assaulted by patients. One of those times I was choked by a patient and later subjected to an investigated because I had stepped on his foot to get away. Although I understand the need to make sure everyone does their job correctly and I was found innocent of any wrong doing, it only added to the stress I deal with on a daily basis.

At times I have been threatened. One example is when a patient yelled at me that he would have my "body cut into tiny pieces". I know that our patients are mentally ill and I do my job with the knowledge that these things can potentially happen. I and my co-workers come back the next day after these kinds of things happen to help those same patients with kindness and empathy. We love our job and we do it well, it still takes its toll on our bodies and minds long after we clock out at the end of our shift.

Although our loved ones know that helping our patients is important to us they continuously worry. They see it when we come home stressed out or injured. And they watch us leave to go to work and wonder if we'll be safe that day. You can't imagine the stress that puts on a family.

Having this bill in place would give some recognition to the hard and import work we do at the Oregon State Hospital. This bill would acknowledge the dedicated staff at the Oregon state hospital and the daily

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risk and stress they go through so we can help the patients better them. Which can help to make sure that we keep the special people needed to do this job.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I hope you will support and pass HB 4011.