



Testimony in Support of HB 3402

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Chair Holvey and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 3402. The Oregon Nurses Association is Oregon's oldest and largest nursing union and professional association, and is proud to represent nearly 15,000 registered nurses, advanced practice nurses and nursing students in Oregon. Oregon nurses make up the largest segment of Oregon's health care work force, and work in nearly every health care setting, from large hospitals to small local clinics, from corrections to school-based health centers and in community-based public health.

ONA is proud of Oregon's safe nurse staffing law, which is the result of extended discussion and collaboration between the Oregon Nurses Association and the Oregon Association of Hospitals & Health Systems. Our collaborative staffing approach was the first law of its kind in the nation and has helped set the frame for the discussion around safe nurse staffing in other states and at the national level. HB 3402 extends the mandatory overtime protections in Oregon's safe nurse staffing law to nurses working for the Department of Corrections.

Nurse staffing regulations help ensure that the obligation of the nurse to provide safe care that meets the patient's needs is the primary consideration in determining nurse staffing levels and shift length. Limitations on mandatory overtime are vital to ensuring the success of any safe staffing plan and help to empower nurses to make the final decision about their ability to work long shifts safely.

Staffing levels impact more than safety; studies consistently demonstrate a correlation between adequate staffing levels and nurse satisfaction and retention. This is true regardless of the care setting. While ONA is proud of the progress we've made to implement a strong staffing law for nurses working in an acute care setting, we firmly believe all nurses and patients deserve these important protections and remain committed to expanding applicable provisions of the law beyond a hospital setting. HB 3402 is a great first step in accomplishing that goal. ONA urges your support.