



## **Testimony in Support of SB 1527**

Oregon Nurses Association

February 4, 2020

Chair Taylor and Members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association in support of the Worker Mobility act. The Oregon Nurses Association is Oregon's oldest and largest nursing union and professional association and is proud to represent over 15,000 registered nurses who work in almost every health care setting -- from large hospitals to small local clinics, from corrections to school-based health centers and in community-based public health.

Nurses and advanced practice nurses provide essential care to families across Oregon, and in rural communities, their ability to change employers ensures that all Oregonians have access to the care they need. When nurses are subject to non-competes in an entire specialized or generalized practice, this not only inhibits that individual's ability to have upward mobility for themselves and their family but restricts a patient's ability to access care.

Non-compete agreements have drastically increased in the past 5 years, according to the Economic Policy Institute, and in 2019, 46.5% of private sector workers were subject to a non-compete. ONA represents thousands of the nurses and nurse practitioners who work in private sector hospitals and clinics and are often subject to non-compete agreements, compromising their employment mobility and the vital services our community needs.

Oregon's current law is opaque and has led to substantial challenges to enforcing worker protections that currently exist. The burden to "void" a non-compete agreement is on the nurse as the employee, and reliant on the nurse's ability to hire an attorney to go to court. This legislation would protect nurses from costly legal fees and potential retaliation from their employer. The current 18-month standard for non-competes ultimately hurts workers and patients. It's critical that nurses can practice in many health care systems and with many employers over the course of their career in order to make sure patients have the access to care that they need.

Oregon's workers need clear rules for non-compete agreements. SB 1527 addresses these rules and ensures that workers have the job mobility they need to take care of their families. The Oregon Nurses Association urges your support of The Worker Mobility Act.