



Service Employees International Union – Oregon State Council

February 21, 2022

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Kennemer, and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Katie Shriver, and I work with the SEIU Oregon State Council. SEIU represents 85,000 working Oregonians, and our mission is to achieve a higher standard of living for our members, their families, and their dependents by elevating social conditions and striving to create a more just society. SEIU represents workers in a range of different job types within hospitals, including surgical technologists. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 4106.

The COVID pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for our health care workers, who despite deep fears and frustrations have shown up at work throughout the pandemic to continue to serve their communities and continue to earn a paycheck. While chronic understaffing was a problem prior to the pandemic, COVID-19 has exacerbated this challenge.

SEIU members currently working in healthcare and long term care also have access to education benefits so they can expand their skills and build their career. The growing number of vacancies in hospitals and in healthcare more broadly is putting additional strain on workers while also making it even more challenging for trainees to find the clinical training hours they need to complete their certification and join the workforce in a new role.

HB 4106 will help to address these challenges by allowing people who are currently enrolled in a specified registered apprenticeship program under oversight of OHA and BOLI to practice as a surgical technologist in a healthcare facility. This change will expand access to clinical training hours, creating opportunities for people who want to enter the healthcare field for the first time and for people who are currently working in healthcare or long term care and who want to expand their skills.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.