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RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2697

To the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

My name is Bruce Humphreys BSN RN and I am a Retired nurse. I most recently worked in the Cardiac Cath Lab at St. Charles-Bend.

Throughout my more than 32 years of nursing, management at hospitals across Oregon have shared dozens of messages praising nurses as "heroes," while, at the same time, ignoring our repeated pleas for assistance. To be frank, these last few years have been extremely difficult for nurses. We don't care about being called heroes; we want help.

We need more staff.

Safe staffing ratios are directly correlated with less medical errors. Would you want your loved one to be cared for by a nurse that was being stretched thin? We're human and it's easy to miss the little things when we've got a lot on our plate. Little things add up to big things QUICKLY with our critically ill patients. Being one of the most profitable critical access hospitals in Oregon, my hospital should be putting our patients before profits. It's the moral and humane thing to do. Our community deserves better. Oregon's nurses deserve better, and our patients deserve more staff.

I have been working on safe staffing legislation since 2001. And while we have made progress, our current law does not provide enough enforcement incentive to make hospitals in Oregon take staffing issues seriously. HB 2697 provides funding for enforcement. The ratios outlined in HB2697 will provide the care our patients expect and need and the staffing required to allow our nurses to receive adequate meal and rest breaks, and to provide excellent, safe care.

Please support HB 2697 and give nurses what they really need: help.

Sincerely yours,

Bruce Humphreys BSN RN

