

**DEB PATTERSON  
STATE SENATOR/SENADORA ESTATAL  
DISTRICT/DISTRITO 10**



**OREGON STATE SENATE/SENADO DEL ESTADO DE OREGON**

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Deb Patterson, State Senator from District 10, which includes South and West Salem, Monmouth and Independence. I am here to add my support to HB 2697, and I thank Chair Nosse, and Representative Nelson for Chief Sponsoring this bill in the House.

HB 2697 would require nurse staffing committees to develop nurse-to-patient ratios in order to assure adequate staffing to support the nurses working across every department of a healthcare facility. This legislation would support the professional nursing staff and studies have shown that it can improve quality of care for patients.

The covid-19 pandemic put an immense strain on nurses for several years. Understaffing in hospitals, however, was a systemic issue in Oregon that predated the pandemic. The Oregon Health Authority found significant staffing issues in all surveyed Oregon hospitals in 2017 and 2019, with 87% of hospitals not having a minimum number of nurses required to staff each shift. Staffing issues this severe create widespread exhaustion and burnout for nurses, causing the problem to grow by decreasing worker retention. We have seen many licensed, experienced nurses leaving the profession long before retirement age, and hospitals have not been able to replace them. Currently, there is a huge nursing shortage across the state in every area of healthcare delivery. Lower nurse-to-patient ratios, I believe, based on the data I have seen, would help to rectify this problem.

The provisions of this legislation would allow registered nurses to provide patients better care. The European Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing found that increased nurse staffing decreased the possibility of many adverse outcomes, including mortality, infection, pneumonia, and medication errors. In other words, decreasing nurse workloads leads to measurable improvements in the care that patients receive, indicating that this legislation would help give both nurses and patients the care and support they need and deserve.

I urge your aye vote to HB 2697.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Deb Patterson'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deb Patterson

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