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RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2697

To the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

My name is Belinda Waterman and I am a nurse at OHSU in the Center for Health and Healing Operating Room.

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. Our unit has the ability to run 15 operating rooms. There is a back log of patients who need surgery and are waiting for us to get staff. We do not have enough staff to run 15 operating rooms, therefore we are making our patients suffer as we can provide care to them in a timely matter.

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 nurse deserve better, and our patients deserve more staff.

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

