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RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2697

To the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

My name is Lauren Yoshida and I am a nurse at OHSU in the Mother baby and Labor and Delivery Units.

Hospitals exist for nursing care. The price of medications and X-rays is certainly debatable but the price of a well-rested nurse is priceless when that patient is you or your family member. A well-rested nurse is how you get excellent, compassionate care every time. Right now, we receive text calls for help nearly every day asking if we can come in and work. This means every day we have tired, over-worked nurses caring for Oregonians. During those shifts, breaks will be hard to come by and often we will be "on-call". Ready to spring into action if our patients need us and no one can give us a break. Studies have shown that adequate staffing saves lives. When that patient is you, try putting a price on that.

I am currently on maternity leave and the thing I am most worried about with returning to work is that I won't get my law protected breaks to pump milk for my baby. There has never been a dedicated break nurse on my floor and the impact is that we "slip away" when we can and if it's too busy- you just don't get a break that day. I have gone without food and water to provide 1:1 care for a new baby who should have been on the NICU but there wasn't staff to care for him. I put him before myself. How ironic will it be if as a Mother/Baby nurse caring for new families, I will have to choose between meeting their needs or my own baby's.

Before maternity leave, I asked my management team how they planned to help me leave the floor to take my pump breaks. They didn't answer except to give tips on how to pump faster. But trying to pump faster won't help you leave the bedside of a patient in need if there isn't anyone to replace you. I have seen colleagues milk supply decrease and they have to start supplementing with formula because nurses put patients first. This is abuse.

Please support HB 2697 and help us help you.

Sincerely yours,

Lauren Yoshida