

Submitter: Katherine Hudson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2697

I am a Labor and Delivery RN at St Charles Hospital in Bend Oregon. I support legislation that would require hospitals to have staffing committees and plans for technical and service staff. In obstetrics it is imperative that our scrub techs and front desk personnel be at their best as it takes the entire team to create a good outcome for patients. When there is an emergency on the unit we rely on everyone equally to show up for it and if one component is missed it can make the difference between life and death for the patient. For instance, we rely on our rooms being stocked with everything we need at our fingertips. Stocking is part of the scrub tech's job but when their time is monopolized by back to back surgeries of course stocking a room becomes impossible as the surgery takes precedence. I know that many times the scrub tech doesn't get a true break for lunch as they are always on call for surgeries and they eat hurriedly because they never know when they might be interrupted. This situation day in and day out on 12 hour shifts causes burnout and it becomes hard to retain these employees. High turnover means less knowledgeable staff and this also effects patient outcomes. Our front desk person is the center of all our communications and if they are stretched beyond what is reasonable by not getting their breaks and having support in their position they tend to leave their jobs as well. Staffing in hospitals, of every worker's position, is imperative to providing good care. Because our system is a for-profit system it's workers are vulnerable to the same stresses placed on those that work for Amazon or Starbucks- i.e. pushing workers to do more in less time or without enough help. The only difference is that the overworked exhausted Amazon or Starbucks employee sends someone the wrong product or produces a luke warm latte versus an overworked exhausted scrub tech who accidentally breaks the sterile field leading to infection or forgets to stock an important life-saving device in a patient room. Please help make our hospitals as good as they can be and pass legislation that enables hospital workers to do their very best for our citizens.