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RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2697

To the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

My name is Rachel Knauss and I am a nurse at OHSU, DCH unit 9N

The past few years we have been challenged with increased acuity of patients and lower staffing ratios. This has created staff burnout resulting in high turnover and unsafe staffing ratios for our patients. In the past few months alone most of the night shift staff have quit due to burnout as we were in the midst of a respiratory crisis at the children's hospital where we were caring for ICU level patients on a medical floor. We were constantly being told "yes this patient is not appropriate to be on your floor, however there is nowhere else for them to go so throw everything you have at them". There have been long stretches of time where myself and other staff members on my floor have not gotten any breaks throughout their 12 hour shift, creating a scenario where we are shoveling food into our mouths in the quick 1-5 minute moment of relief we might have. I love my job and I would not want to be doing anything else but I also believe that in order for myself and other fellow nurses to provide the best possible care to our patients as well as retain people in this profession we need help! We deserve breaks, we deserve rest periods, we deserve to have a chance to drink water and collect our thoughts, all of these things are necessary to allow us to provide the best care possible as well as take care of ourselves.

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

Sincerely yours,  
Rachel Knauss