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RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2697

Dear Committee Members on Behavioral Health and Health Care

My name is Mark Gibbs and I am a nurse at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center in the Emergency Department. I have worked as an Emergency Room Nurse for over 10 years, during this time, our ability to attract and retain nurses in this role has continued to diminish. The responsibilities for keeping patients safe coupled with the stresses that nurses experience in this job have been intensified by the pandemic. It is time that the state adopts safe staffing ratios so that patients can receive proper and timely care when they are in a time of need.

Research has demonstrated that safe staffing ratios provide better care outcomes. Errors are caught sooner, eyes are on patients more frequently, we can be at the bedside more to observe changes in condition, we can make sure someone doesn't fall. Hospital executives will tell you that technology like remote monitoring can help with these issues, that is just not accurate.

We need more staff.

Hospital executives will state that this creates a financial burden on hospitals and hospital systems; massive medical errors and resulting extended hospital stays due to those errors also cause financial burden. Patient falls due to someone being confused or weak also cause financial burden, and aren't prevented by someone sitting in a room watching multiple patients on a monitor.

I could go on with examples of things that nurses do to that result in lower costs to our healthcare system but I am sure you have already been provided with many examples so I just want to express this single point. Please support HB 2697 so that nurses can provide the proper care and support that people expect when they enter our healthcare system both for routine care and life threatening issues.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Gibbs