

February 27, 2023

Testimony in Support of HB 2697

To the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care,

My name is Alexa Bella and I am a registered nurse at Providence Portland Medical Center.

You have likely heard emphatic opposition to this measure from hospital executives and administrators, saying that the costs are too high and that it won't solve Oregon's nursing shortage. As a frontline healthcare worker, I don't believe that these executive leaders are in touch with what we nurses experience in our daily work. I can tell you that we are frequently asked to care for more patients with higher acuity than we can safely handle. Additionally, we often do not have adequate staff to cover our legally required breaks. Nurses are burning out and leaving the profession at a record pace. Creating safer workplaces for us and our patients would go a long way in attracting and retaining new nurses in Oregon.

I think it speaks volumes that every nurse I know is strongly in favor of this bill, and every hospital administration is speaking out against it. Nurses care about their patients and colleagues first and foremost, while executives are putting profit above people. Please support the people who are actually providing care in Oregon's hospitals by mandating safe staffing ratios for nurses.

Sincerely,

Alexa Bella, RN