

Submitter: Sarina Roher

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2697

My name is Sarina Roher. As a RN Care Coordinator, I am a member of the Professional Bargaining Unit. I became a Nurse almost two decades ago after my own experience as a patient. I was 20 years old when I delivered my stillborn baby by c-section. When I woke up from my surgery my nurse was sitting in the rocking chair next to my bedside with tears rolling down her face. When she realized that I was awake she quickly wiped the tears away, stood up and went into complete "nurse mode" where I felt like her only job in the world was to care for me. She was my hero and why I stand before you today. I knew that if I could someday take care of someone, like Cyndee cared for me and my family, that I would be ok.

I am a good nurse and have been able to care for thousands of patients, but I am NOT ok! Today's working conditions do not allow for nurses and other important members of the healthcare team to spend that kind of time and special attention on our patients. If I was a patient with the same circumstances today that I had all those years ago, I imagine I would be lucky to have a nurse at my bedside at all when I woke up.

I work in a very busy emergency room where a high percentage of my pts are of marginalized groups. Our current healthcare system is failing them as a direct result of unsafe staffing and limited access. To be clear – this is NOT a result of a nursing wages or nursing & healthcare worker shortage, this is a result of people who have had to make tough decisions to leave the work they love because the working conditions that are unsafe, unsustainable and too often unethical leading to moral injury. Over the last couple of years, I have thought about leaving my profession because I cannot help my pts the way I should be able to.

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Representatives, – YOU – have the power to help working Oregonians and the communities we serve with House Bill 2697. We MUST have this type of legislation in place to protect our patients and to create an environment in the hospitals that people want to work in again. We need the day-to-day work to be safe and sustainable. We need safe staffing to be Mandatory, not just a "suggestion! Thank you.