



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

TO: Chair Nosse
Vice-Chairs Goodwin and Nelson
Members of the House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee

FR: Catie Theisen, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: HB 2697 Safe Hospital Staffing Support

February 28, 2023

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across Oregon including thousands of front line health care workers.

We know that each and every Oregon worker and their families rely on the critical care that nurses, CNAs, technicians and other health care workers provide every day. It's critical that we take this opportunity to create a health care system that respects their labor, their voices and expertise, and puts in place systems that support and sustain this industry long-term.

HB 2697 is an appropriately robust response to do just that by:

- Establish numerical standards of how many patients a nurse may be charged with caring for — the standard serving as a floor
- Expand the staffing committee model, creating new staffing committees for hospital technical staff, hospital service staff, and professional staff
- Resolve caregivers' impossible decision between providing patient care and taking quick breaks for eating and resting during their 12-hour shifts
- Bolster the role of the Oregon Health Authority in ensuring the staffing standards are met
- Enshrine a voice for workers who do home health care or who are technical, service, or professional staff in a hospital to collaboratively set staffing standards, additional to the requirements of the bill for hospital nursing care

We know that patient outcomes improve when hospitals are appropriately staffed and caregivers can take the time they need to recoup, eat, sleep and be with their own families. This balance is a basic tenant of labor protections that is critical to those providing life-saving care.

We have long been facing a health care crisis and the time to act is now. Oregon has a moral imperative to address the burnout health care workers are experiencing both for those workers, and to make sure that all Oregonians can continue to access the highest quality of care for many years to come. We encourage your support of HB 2697.