To: Chair Holvey
      Vice-Chairs Elmer and Sosa
      Members of the House Business and Labor Committee

FR: Catie Theisen, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: HB 2921 Support

March 20, 2023

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across Oregon and is a voice for all workers in the legislative process.

We know that as lawmakers continue to move the dial on policies that create a better Oregon, data is key. Namely, data that helps us understand if and where currently and historically marginalized communities are disproportionately impacted. However, we also know that the lack of this data is significant, and often stands in the way of being able to identify the best policy solutions on a variety of issues – from healthcare to workplace protections to education and beyond.

HB 2921 helps address this by providing transparency about the racial makeup of hospital staff. Having this data for each hospital would allow for deeper conversations around racial equity in Oregon's health care provider workforce, and help give us the information needed to build a better, more diverse system.

Unfortunately we know that institutional racism and implicit biases play a big role in the daily life of many Oregonians. Specific to healthcare, the American Nurses Association found that nurses of color faced significant barriers to career advancement, and many struggled to stay in the nursing profession. These disparities are important to address, because patients are better served when their healthcare professionals can offer linguistically and culturally appropriate and responsive care.

HB 2921 is just a starting point to help collect the data the state needs to meaningfully understand what barriers are in place for workers and the communities they serve. We encourage your support of HB 2921.