

March 29, 2023

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE Salem, OR 97302

Re: House Bill 3324

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Nelson and Goodwin, and committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3324-1 on behalf of Portland Community College. PCC's nursing program provides high-quality nursing education to meet the evolving health needs of our community. The program prepares students to enter the nursing profession or continue their education in a four-year program. 100% of our 2019 graduation class were either employed as a nurse or enrolled in a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program within six months of graduation.

PCC is committed to educating Oregon's nursing workforce, but one of the biggest barriers to meeting the workforce need is the inability to recruit and retain nurse educators. As colleges, we cannot pay wages that are competitive with what nurses earn in practice, putting prospective nursing faculty in a position where they would have to take a pay cut in order to teach. Earlier this month, the Oregon Longitudinal Data Collaborative's Postsecondary Healthcare Education Shortage in Oregon report found that the pay discrepancy between nursing faculty and practicing nurses is larger than in other states¹. New graduate nurses from our program often make more after graduation than their professors and instructors with Masters and Doctorate degrees.

Colleges need financial help to recruit and retain qualified nursing instructors. I hope you will join me in supporting HB 3324-1 as one crucial step to address the nursing workforce shortage in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Janeen Hull, Dean of Academic & Career Pathways - Healthcare and Emergency Professions

¹ Postsecondary Healthcare Education Shortage in Oregon report, page 79
<https://www.oregon.gov/highered/research/Documents/SLDS/STUDY-PostsecondaryHealthcareEducationShortageInOregonFinal.pdf>