



To: House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

From: Jalesa Malabanan

Date: 1/31/24

RE: HB 4045 Public Safety Workforce Stabilization Act of 2024

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice Chair Lewis, Vice Chair Tran, and members of the committee,

My name is Jalesa Malabanan, I am writing in support of HB 4045 Public Safety Workforce Stabilization to retain and recruit workers at the Oregon State Hospital (OSH) and 911 telecommunicators.

I am a resident of Springfield/Eugene area, and I began my career at OSH as a Mental Health Therapist 2. My job today entails direct care support within the secure perimeter of the campus. On any given day, I work closely with up to 24 clients a day and am in contact with them the entire shift.

Unfortunately, despite the investments the Oregon Legislature has made in mental and behavioral health services, more needs to be done. The underfunding of services and critical staffing needs impacts the safety of the workforce and the quality of care for patients. This leads to workplace injuries and illnesses for state hospital workers, making the state's psychiatric institute the most dangerous place to work.

- I believe HB 4045-1 would improve the recruitment and retention issues for staff
- The reality is that many of my colleagues don't live long after retirement or carry with them an immense amount of physical and psychological trauma. With a lower retirement age and enhanced benefits, I would like for myself and coworkers who are in close contact with clients to also receive compensation
- Due to the compromises in the bill, I know that I will not see the full extent of the benefits. My hope is that this will happen.

OSH workers on the secure campus, like me, deserve improved retirement benefits that recognize the dignity and value of our years of service. These benefits are vital for the wellbeing of OSH workers who must often retire early due to the immense physical, emotional, and mental toll of their jobs.

I ask members of the committee to fully support HB 4045. This bill will immensely help the state's psychiatric and nursing workforce in the secure psychiatric facility. We need the Legislature to support the workers at OSH so we can continue to do our jobs: serving patients.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jalesa Malabanan