



February 13, 2024

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

From: Emerson Hamlin, Political Organizer, Oregon Nurses Association

Re: Support for HB 4093

Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Lewis and Tran, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). ONA is a professional association and labor union representing over 17,000 nurses and healthcare professionals. Our members work in urban and rural hospitals, clinics, school-based health centers, home health, and county health departments across Oregon.

Many Oregonians drink and use cannabis in moderation, and do not experience adverse health effects. Unfortunately, excessive alcohol use can have serious health consequences, including liver disease, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and strokes.¹ Worse still, alcohol can be deadly: Oregon has seen a nearly 40% increase in alcohol-related deaths in the last year, making it the third leading cause of preventable death in the state.² This loss of life is heartbreaking for families and communities. It also has a significant financial impact on our state, costing \$4.8 billion per year.³ These factors must be considered when policies related to alcohol are discussed, particularly in discussions by the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC).

OLCC board members occupy a powerful position within our state. By working on policy, administrative rules, approving licenses, and more, the Board has significant impact over Oregon's alcohol and cannabis industry. Requiring one representative on the OLCC board to have a background in public health ensures that the impacts of excessive alcohol and cannabis use on individual and community health will be considered during OLCC's discussions and decision-making process. Doing so will provide important balance for the board, and more awareness around potential consequences of policy decisions. Please support HB 4093. Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Emerson Hamlin

¹ "Medical Complications: Common Alcohol-Related Concerns." National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

² "Excessive Alcohol Use Prevention" Oregon Health Authority: Home: Excessive Alcohol Use: State of Oregon, www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/preventionwellness/excessivealcoholuse/pages/index.aspx.

³ "Excessive Alcohol Use Prevention" Oregon Health Authority: Home: Excessive Alcohol Use: State of Oregon, www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/preventionwellness/excessivealcoholuse/pages/index.aspx.

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ONA is an affiliate of the American Nurses Association, AFT and AFL-CIO