

Anna, RN in Portland

February 5, 2025

Testimony in Support of UI for Striking Workers (SB 916)

To the Senate Committee on Labor and Business:

I'm a registered nurse in one of the 8 Providence hospitals currently on strike. I can assure you that none of the more than 5,000 nurses and providers who walked out on January 10th wants to be out on the street on cold, freezing days, instead of inside the hospital caring for our patients. We are doing so to protect our patients, our community.

My nursing peers in our bargaining unit have been negotiating with Providence since September 2023. That's more than one year. We are not asking for anything that's not already written in other local hospital contracts. Providence refuses to listen to the people who are actually at the bedside providing care.

We're simply asking for market equitable wages and benefits to retain our staff, and most importantly, safe staffing language that will guarantee we can provide safe and excellent care to our community.

I am the sole provider for my family, while my husband is recovering from a debilitating, life threatening condition.

My family is hurting financially, this is a huge sacrifice. But I'm doing it, because I believe we have a responsibility to care safely for our patients. Providence prefers to spend millions in replacement workers, overstaffing units while delaying care by reducing the number of occupied beds.

This legislation will protect workers like myself, who have been without wages for 26 days, and who knows how many more. It will also encourage employers to bargain in good faith.

Thank you for accepting my testimony and I look forward to your support.