

Submitter: Jamie RN
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB916

RE: Support for SB 916

To the Senate Committee On Labor and Business,

I am writing to urge your support for the bill that would allow striking nurses to receive unemployment benefits during a strike. As a registered nurse who has dedicated my career to patient care, I never imagined I would find myself in this position—struggling to survive financially because my employer refuses to provide safe staffing conditions and fair compensation.

For years, I worked in an incredible emergency department in Astoria, where I loved my job, my coworkers, and the patients I served. But I was persuaded to leave that position for what seemed like an amazing opportunity at Providence. I uprooted my entire life and moved my family to Oregon City, spending my life savings to buy a home, trusting that this was the right move for my future. I even took a \$5 per hour pay cut, believing the promise of better health benefits and a supportive work environment.

What I walked into was the opposite. Unsafe staffing ratios, nurses feeling overworked and undervalued, and management that refused to listen to the concerns of frontline staff. Within two months of starting my new job, I learned we were going on strike. Now, I am in a crisis of my own—unable to pay my \$4,000 mortgage, \$1,000 car payment, and other essential bills, all while Providence refuses to negotiate in good faith. I have not made a single penny in the last month.

The financial strain is unbearable. When I got sick during the strike, I couldn't even afford to go to the doctor because our new insurance through Aetna required a \$150 payment just to be seen. I am skipping meals or eating cheap, unhealthy food just to stretch what little I have left. And now, I live in fear that I will lose my home and my car—all because I chose to stand up for my rights and for the safety of my patients.

No one should have to choose between fighting for fair working conditions and financial ruin. This bill is not about rewarding striking workers—it is about ensuring that those of us who dedicate our lives to caring for others do not end up homeless, hungry, or bankrupt because we stood up for what's right.

I ask you to stand with us, the nurses who are the backbone of healthcare. Please

support this bill and give striking workers the ability to survive while we fight for the respect and conditions we deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jamie RN