

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

RE: Support for SB 916

To our Oregon legislature:

I am writing to urge you to support Senate Bill 916/House Bill 3434, granting unemployment benefits to our striking caregivers. Right now, thousands of dedicated workers are at a severe disadvantage when bargaining with Providence who has repeatedly shown to inconsequential movement on necessary contract changes. Without our reliable source of income, we are forced to choose between conceding on reasonable competitive wages and owed back pay, or conceding to unfair conditions placing patients as well as providers at risk of harm. Providence leadership is voicing their opinion that optimal patient care and employee retention are worth sacrificing to protect their personal compensation.

Unemployment benefits serve as a crucial safety net, ensuring our most vulnerable coworkers do not find themselves deprived of a clear voice of support for improving care in Oregon. A strike is not a vacation; it is a last resort against dangerous staffing, employment instability, and exploitative wages. Allowing these benefits would restore some balance to labor negotiations, ensuring we are given a fair say in how our lived experiences determine the quality of care Oregonians can expect in their most critical moments. Please stand with your friends, family, and neighbors and support this essential legislation.

I look forward to seeing you take action and ensuring a lasting commitment to our essential workers.

Sincerely,
Dave Martens RN