

Submitter: Oregon Nurse
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,

Good afternoon!

I believe that striking workers should be eligible for unemployment. When a worker is on strike, they are no longer able to tolerate their workplace. Their company or corporation has taken advantage of them to the point they feel their only option to improve their work environment, day to day job, and benefits, is to go on strike. This is no easy task, in fact an incredible sacrifice. In the company I work for, we fight for measly raises while our CEOs make millions. I believe this is a pattern across the US and in all industries. As a health care worker, I find it particularly disheartening. We, as many unionized employees, are the frontline workers of our industry. We allow our industry to function, and therefore serve the community. We provide care to vulnerable patients, we save their lives. The leaders that hired us to do this important work have forgotten how to respect us, and how to give us a livable and sustainable career. We will not leave nursing, but we deserve to be supported for upholding the reputation of our hospital and taking care of our community.

I have currently been on strike for 29 days. That is 29 days of zero income, and zero support from our employer. I am taking on an enormous sacrifice to stand strong not only for myself but for my peers, my colleagues, and all future nurses. Portland is not a cheap city to live in. Losing a month plus of income is detrimental to our lives and the lives of our loved ones.

I love being a nurse, genuinely I want this field to grow and prosper because without nurses we have no healthcare. Nurses are afraid to enter this field because of the sacrifices we are making right now. With nearly every hospital in Oregon unionized or on their way there, we need protection to be able to strike. Our hospitals are able to shell out millions of dollars every week to prevent us from coming back, we deserve the ability to stay outside as long as it takes. Unemployment would allow the most vulnerable of us to join us, would allow single moms and dads, single income nurses, each and every one of us to stand together against our profiting hospital. We need this.

Thank you for reading our stories and our pleas. Grant the working class this benefit

so we can build equality and sustainable jobs in our fields.

Oregon Nurse