



To: Oregon House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards

From: Anthony Castaneda, SEIU 503

Date: February 17, 2025

RE: SEIU 503 support HB 3363

Dear, Chair Grayber, Vice Chair Elmer, and Vice Chair Munoz, and member of the committee,

My name is Anthony Castaneda, I am testifying on behalf of SEIU 503. I am writing in support of HB 3363 to determine a PERS cap that reflects a reasonable expectation of overtime hours served.

SEIU 503 represents over 72,000 public workers providing essential services to Oregonians. HB 3363 would impact workers, such as those at the Oregon State Hospital (OSH) and the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA), who are required to work mandatory overtime.

Currently, all overtime is included in the final calculation for Tier One and Tier Two PERS beneficiaries, but there is a cap of 300 overtime hours for all Tier Three PERS employees. With demand for services increasing, workers are asked to give more. However, only 300 hours of their accrued overtime is included in their final PERS benefit at the end of their careers. HB 3363 would clarify the existing Oregon statute which directs DAS to create a PERS cap that reflects a “reasonable expectation” of the overtime hours served.

Agencies, such as OSH and OYA, which are fundamental to the well-being and safety of our communities, rely heavily on overtime as an ongoing part of their daily operations. Capping overtime in pension calculations not only fails to account for the unique demands of these roles, but it also undermines the fair compensation and retirement security that these dedicated public servants deserve.

The data backs the experience of workers. As a result of chronic understaffing and high vacancies, OSH workers, for example, clock the most overtime of any workplace in the

Oregon Health Authority (OHA) with more than 219,000 hours in 2021. A closer look at the data also showed that Mental Health Therapy Technicians worked the most overtime, equivalent to more than 40 full-time equivalent positions or more than 83,000. While there is a decline in total overtime from recent years, Oregon State Hospital consistently represents most of the overtime within OHA year-to-year.

Overtime hours compound the physical and mental pressures of working in a psychiatric care environment. Due to the demands of the job and staffing shortages, workers simply don't have enough time to rest. The difference in mortality between people with job strain and without is equivalent to the difference between smokers and non-smokers.

Overtime is also time away from their families and loved ones. Our members often talk about the missed basketball games, dance and music recitals, birthday parties, date nights or having to scrap vacation plans because they cannot get coverage.

By allowing overtime to be included in pension calculations, we send a strong message that we support those who support us. This is not simply about increasing pension payouts, but about recognizing and compensating employees for the extraordinary demands of their work. These workers are entitled to a pension that reflects the reality of their earnings over the years of service they have dedicated to keeping our communities safe and healthy.

I urge the committee to consider the unique and essential role that healthcare and public safety workers play in our society. These workers often go above and beyond the call of duty, regularly working overtime in critical situations. Reevaluating how overtime is calculated in their pension is a necessary step toward fairly compensating these workers for their service and ensuring that they can retire with the security they deserve.

We owe it to them to recognize their extraordinary contributions and honor their service by ensuring that their pensions accurately reflect the totality of their work, including the overtime that is often required in these vital professions. Please support HB 3363.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anthony Castaneda, SEIU 503