

**TRAVIS NELSON**  
**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
HOUSE DISTRICT 44  
NORTH/NORTHEAST PORTLAND



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**Support for House Bill 2203**

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair Javadi and Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare,

My name is Travis Nelson, and I am the State Representative for House District 44 North and Northeast Portland. In the over 20 years I have been a Registered Nurse, I've seen colleagues and friends hurt—physically attacked, emotionally traumatized, and left with little to no support from the very systems meant to support and protect them.

tangible changes to keep healthcare workers safe. The -1 amendment is based off of recommendations that have been provided from the task force. This legislation requires behavioral health workplaces to have real safety plans, equip lone workers with emergency communication devices, and ensure workers get the de-escalation training they need. It requires tracking and reporting of dangerous incidents, so we can stop problems before they escalate. And just as importantly, this bill also protects workers from retaliation for reporting safety concerns or acting in self-defense.

This is not mundane policy – this is personal. It is personal to our frontline workers. It is their reality. I've been there. I've seen the exhaustion and the fear. We have all seen the high turnover and problems recruiting. These are our community members that we rely on; these are people who are simply trying to do their jobs and care for others. It is unacceptable that those who dedicate their lives to healing are left to suffer alone when they are hurt. We have a responsibility to change that.

The -2 amendment came after concerns from some of the stakeholders, that would like to institute certain policies for worker safety. We are continuing to engage with stakeholders and the Task Force to identify and address any additional and necessary revisions for a final amendment.

I want to thank all of the members from the Task Force for their hard work to develop this policy and their continued engagement on this issue. I also want to thank the staff from LPRO for all of their hard work getting these recommendations turned into the -1 amendment.

I urge you to support HB 2203. This bill is a lifeline. It is a message to behavioral health workers that their safety matters. That they matter.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Travis Nelson".

State Representative Travis Nelson  
House District 44, North/NE Portland