

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

My name is Lauren Fuentes. I am a cath lab nurse at Providence Portland Medical Center and a member of Oregon Nurses Association. I support SB 916 which would repeal the law blocking unemployment benefits to workers on strike. This bill would help ensure that workers are able to stay afloat while fighting for a fair

We as nurses are the ones who provide care for you and your loved ones on the worst day of your lives. Your health and your life is in our hands when you become a patient. All that we ask is to have a the safe staffing to provide the quality care that we want to provide and that we are compensated accordingly. As we fight for these things our greatest hurdle is financial. We don't have the same deep pockets Providence has to be on equal footing in negotiations. As the sole income earner for my family I am financially limited in my ability to strike long enough for a fair deal. All we ask is for more equal footing to obtain a reasonable contract.

Ending this exclusion of UI benefits for strikes that go over 7 days will help make sure that workers like me can continue to pay our rent, feed our families, afford prescription drugs or pay our COBRA health care payments while out on strike. This will mean that we aren't forced into an unsafe or unfair contract just because the employer can starve us out. And those UI payments will work as intended: to also put money back into the local economy at times of economic distress.

Strikes are always a measure of absolute last resort. Please help ensure that workers like me – nurses, teachers, grocery and construction workers and so many more – are not forced into unsafe or unfair contracts simply because we can't afford to exercise our legally protected right to strike. Please vote yes on SB 916.