

Oregon Nurse in Portland  
February 5, 2025  
Testimony in Support of UI for Striking Workers

To the Senate Committee on Labor and Business:

Unemployment insurance will be a great relief for any workers who need to go on a strike to financially protect themselves and to lead to a better turnout for the strike.

Some people view nurses on strike as being greedy because they think we "get paid enough". However, we ask for increase in wages for several reasons such as to stay competitive so that we can retain good nurses and to endure inflations. We don't have a best health insurance which requires a high amount of deductibles. We are asking to modify this as well, but if not, significant increase in wages are even more important to take care of ourselves. Not being able to retain nurses leads to long-term staff shortages and lower quality of patient care, which affects both patients and nurses negatively. This leads to one of the other negotiations we are making for safe staffing. Without an appropriate nurse to patient ratio, patient will not be able to get a quality care and nurses are not able to maintain their own health and there is an increase possibility of them to leave the profession, which leads to a vicious cycle of worse patient care. In order to ensure high quality of care for the community, we need to ask for more protection/better care for nurses.

Because of these reasons, we had to go on indefinite strike. It was very scary for everyone not to be able to predict when it will end. Everyone is saving every penny possible during the strike. Not everyone can choose to go on a strike due to their financial situations so some are forced to cross the line. The number of people who are holding the line is vital to show how many people are demanding the needs. With the unemployment insurance, we will be able to fight for our needs stronger and longer to ensure patient safety.

Thank you,  
Oregon Nurse in Portland