

Submitter: Meghan Bingham RN
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,

My name is Meghan Bingham and I am writing to the legislature in favor of Senate Bill 916/House Bill 3434. As a resident of Milwaukie, I am a transplant Oregonian currently working at Providence Milwaukie Hospital as a Registered Nurse in Surgical Services. I originally moved to the state of Oregon to take a position as a Resource Pool nurse with Legacy Health. As of the writing of this letter, the Caregivers and Providers of eight Providence hospitals and three clinics have endured twenty-nine days on their respective picket lines in order to be seen and heard by our employer, Providence Healthcare. As a Caregiver who has been financially impacted by this unprecedented strike, the issue that I find the most disturbing is how our freedom of choice has been overbearingly influenced by the complete loss of our income. How can anyone say that their choice was theirs to make when their livelihood is threatened? In the days leading up to the start of our strike on January 11th, I heard firsthand comments from co-workers, who decided to cross the picket line, that they did not have a choice in the matter. Their financial stability was more pressing than standing up to Providence and fighting for betterment of our profession. I heard many anecdotes from my colleagues including having a single source of income, supporting extended family, having just returned to work from an extended leave, extensive medical bills and so many more. With the passing of Senate Bill 916/House Bill 3434, it would have allowed these workers to stand where their heart is and not where Providence's financial leverage lies. So, like thousand of others, I made a choice to make a personal sacrifice in order to create lasting change for myself, and generations of nurses to come. In summary, I implore you as lawmakers reading this letter to help not only the healthcare workers currently on strike, but the voices of union workers everywhere be heard in our state.

Thank you for accepting my testimony and I look forward to your support.