

Submitter: Peter Sumner  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4074

#### Written Testimony in Opposition to HB 4074

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Nelson and Diehl, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Peter Sumner. I am a Registered Nurse and have worked as one for 8 years. I currently work at Kaiser Westside Hospital in Hillsboro, OR, and I am a member of the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals (OFNHP AFT-5017). I am writing in strong opposition to HB 4074. Every day, I provide direct patient care, and the nurse staffing law passed in 2023 has a real impact on my ability to do my job safely and effectively. HB 4074 would make significant changes to the enforcement of that law. If passed, the accountability that holds Kaiser Permanente to a higher standard for their patients in the Oregon region will be gone.

HB 2697 was the result of years of research, negotiation, and stakeholder engagement. Rushing through changes to the statute will only put providers and patients at risk. Advancing HB 4074 now would shortcut that process and risk unintended consequences that cannot be fully evaluated in the limited time available. From my experience, the current law is working as intended, and barriers to passing plans are rooted in unwillingness to utilize escalation and acuity tools. Hospitals were given ample time to comply, and the vast majority have done so. Our administrative team at Kaiser Westside on the Hospital Staffing Committee, led by CNO Calvin Thomas, continuously avoid, dodge, and cancel regularly scheduled meetings of the Hospital Staffing Committee and the nurses who are a part of it rather than engage in meaningful discussion about perceived barriers to passing a hospital staffing plan. Despite my department, PACU, submitting an exact copy of the plan our department practices daily, meaning no changes would be necessary to staffing levels and planning, our hospital administrators continuously strike down our proposal on the rare occasion we do meet. On a day where my department is short staffed going against the odds of surgical volume and case load, and nurses begin to miss their breaks to keep up with the demands of a busy schedule, our CNO Calvin Thomas has stated to my entire department at a unit meeting that he would rather pay state fines for missed breaks than pay to fill vacancies in our nursing schedule because it is cheaper. When HB 2697 passed in 2023, Kaiser failed upfront to prepare for heightened expectations of quality healthcare for the people of Oregon, they made no effort to catch up or hire staff where necessary, and it has been clear that their plan all along was to wait for the financial accountability of HB 2697 to potentially disappear in the future. This is the opportunity they have been waiting for, do not let them get the easy way out. Continue to hold them accountable so that the people of Oregon can continue to receive the high quality healthcare they deserve.

Weakening enforcement through delayed penalties or reduced accountability would

effectively suspend the law without the thoughtful analysis such changes demand.  
For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to oppose HB 4074 as currently written.  
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Peter Sumner  
BSN, RN, CCRN