

Submitter: Cassie Taylor
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 Cassie Taylor. I am a Bachelor's prepared Registered Nurse and have worked as a Registered Nurse for 17 years. I currently work at Kaiser Sunnyside Medical Center in Clackamas, 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 ratios will reflect bare-minimum nursing coverage instead of acuity-based, patient focused, excellent nursing care. As a professional health care provider working on a short-staffed unit every day, I can tell you first hand the passing of this bill will also make the healthcare worker shortage even more abysmal than it already is. Many nurses are leaving the profession entirely due to the grueling expectations that already exist; this would increase them exponentially.

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 (3 years), and the vast majority have done so. We have several plans that have passed, and those that have not are due to management disengagement and refusal to backfill staff for attendance at those meetings. Additionally, leadership has stated they'd "rather pay the fines than staff us appropriately".

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,
Cassie Taylor, RN, BSN, CCRN