

Submitter: Derek Akimoto  
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 Derek Akimoto. I am a RN and have worked an RN for over 16 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, there will be no accountability on Kaisers part to adequately staff our units and therefore put our patients and staff in unsafe positions leading to mistakes and burnout. Prior to the staffing law that was passed in 2023, it was very common for bedside nurses to double up or “buddy break” for lunch relief because our hospital would not staff for lunch coverages. On our unit in the ICU, emergencies can happen at any moment and there have been times during lunch coverages where I, as the nurse breaking another nurse would ultimately have delayed care to either my patients assigned or the other nurses patients. If this new house bill passes, these hospital systems, like Kaiser, are putting profits over patient safety. It also ultimately causes increased burnout rates for bedside staff, like myself, by unnecessarily and unfairly increasing the work load, all to save a few bucks.

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. I don't quite understand how hospitals like Kaiser state they haven't had enough time especially because in places like California have a staffing law and Kaiser is more prominent throughout the state of California. There has been many nights when I have worked our unit was short staffed or lacked a unit skill that ultimately understaffed the unit and the decision by admin was not to put out a page for staff to pick up or offer overtime to staff who'd made themselves available that shift. I've also been on the other end when I've made myself available and wouldn't get a call only to find out that my unit was extremely busy and/or understaffed.

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,

Derek Akimoto BSN, RN, CCRN, CSC, CMC