

Submitter: Jennie Johnson  
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 Jennie Johnson. I am a staff registered nurse and have worked as a registered nurse for 11 years. I currently work at Kaiser Sunnyside Medical Center in Clackamas, Oregon, 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, it would increase falls, adverse outcomes and staff safety. I am worried that my patients will receive poor care because of the lack of staff members to care for them. Healthcare is a human right and not adequate staffing for that health-care is an injustice.

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. At the hospital, we are frequently understaffed and because our employer refuses to agree to staffing plans, we continue to not have enough staff to give the deserved care of our patients. I remember a time when a patient of mine was not assigned a certified nursing assistant (CNA) because our employer only gave us enough CNAs for 7-14 of our patients in a unit with 19 patients. That patient ended up falling while going to the bathroom. I was in with another patient at the time and because there was no CNA assigned to the patient, the patient fell while trying to get out of bed unassisted because they could not wait for me to be done with the other patient to help them. If they were assigned a CNA, they likely wouldn't have fallen because they would have been able to get help faster. My employer skirts the law by saying not all patients need a CNA. Best practice and safe care is the reason this law was enacted and for my employer to interpret it as not every patient needs a CNA is the opposite of safe care.

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,  
Jennie Johnson  
RN, BSN, CMSN