

Submitter: Joanna Gummow
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4074

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joanna and I am an ICU nurse in Oregon. I am writing in strong support of HB 4074.

Every shift in the ICU, we care for the sickest patients in the hospital — individuals on ventilators, multiple life-sustaining drips, continuous dialysis, and advanced monitoring. These patients require constant assessment and rapid intervention. When staffing is inadequate, patient safety is directly compromised.

I have personally experienced assignments where nurses were stretched beyond safe capacity due to staffing shortages. In critical care, even a few minutes' delay can mean the difference between recovery and irreversible harm. When staffing plans are inconsistent or not enforced hospital-wide, bedside nurses are placed in morally distressing situations — forced to choose which critically ill patient needs attention first.

HB 4074 promotes the implementation of a hospital-wide nurse staffing plan developed and adopted by the nurse staffing committee. This ensures that those closest to patient care — frontline nurses — have a voice in creating realistic, evidence-based staffing standards. Research consistently shows that appropriate nurse-to-patient ratios reduce mortality, decrease complications, shorten hospital stays, and improve nurse retention.

This bill is not about convenience; it is about safety. It protects patients and supports the healthcare workforce at a time when burnout and turnover are at historic highs. Sustainable staffing models improve outcomes for everyone — patients, families, nurses, and hospitals.

As an ICU nurse, I ask you to support HB 4074 to ensure that staffing plans are meaningful, enforceable, and centered on patient safety.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Joanna G, BSN, RN