

Submitter: Amanda Stout
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4074

Amanda Stout
2/12/26

Re: Testimony in Opposition to HB 4074.

To the h
Health Care Committee:

I am writing to strongly oppose HB 4074.

I don't know what happens in other staffing committees, but I would like to enlighten this body on what happened in the staffing committee I have been a member of for the last several years.

In my hospital, Sacred Heart Medical Center at Riverbend, a Peacehealth facility, our staffing committee has ground to a halt. We have multiple units without approved staffing plans because the management half of the committee stopped all work on addressing the acuity tool that supports nurses across the hospital in creating safe nurse assignments. We had an ad hoc sub group working collaboratively to define these assignments- nurse managers and frontline staff working together to create an acuity tool that would ensure patients with high acuity and high work intensity needs would receive the care they deserved.

Given what I can only describe what appears to be a directive from above to stop all work we invited Peacehealth Riverbend's Chief Medical Officer, to our staffing committee and he expressed very clearly that he would rather pay the fines rather than have his nurse management team be "leveraged" into plans they didn't agree to. This characterization of the work I was a part of, the collaboration happening between managers and frontline staff, as bedside nurses somehow strong-arming management completely and utterly false.

With the deliberate cessation of this work, Peacehealth has set themselves up to receiving fines on a daily basis due to lack of an approved hospital staffing law. This is acting in bad faith and highlights the reality that they were never intending to follow the law and always assumed they could deploy their well-funded lobbyists to appeal to this body to effectively end the safe staffing provisions provided by HB 2697. This should enrage the gentlefolk of this body as much as it enrages me and the people I

serve through the staffing committee.

You must remember this: Peacehealth and the hospitals of Oregon had a seat at the table. They worked collaboratively with members of this body and frontline staff in the creation of HB 2697. They were given ample time to comply, additional time before fines would start to be levied, and a clearly defined appeals process. Any and all characterizations that HB 2697 creates catastrophic administrative and financial burden is nothing but crocodile tears. They deliberately orchestrated this "financial crisis" in order to tell you the law is untenable. Shame on them.

Lastly, I urge you to listen when frontline staff tell you what is needed to provide safe care. When they tell you they are afraid something bad is going to happen, when they share their stories of bad things that have happened, it is your responsibility to listen and to believe. Frontline staff- nurses, CNAs, techs- are the ones closest to the patients. They are the ones actually invested in caring for their communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and I urge you to join me in opposing the bill.

Amanda Stout