

Submitter: Nichole Dodge
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 Nichole Dodge. I am an RN and have worked as an RN for 18 years. I currently work at Kaiser 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, patients will wait longer for their care, they will get less time with their nurses, less time getting out of bed. Nurses are already pushed to the limits with the time they are able to provide for their patients, this time is imperative to insure that I have enough time to assess my patient accurately so they can be treated properly. Patients not only need assessments, they also need their vitals taken, they need, medications, time to get out of bed, assistance to the bathroom, assistance with ADL's, eating, dressing, etc. Increasing the nurse to patient ratio will increase falls, increase length of stays, increase hospital acquired complications, etc.

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. We know that this law can be met, for instance it has been in place for decades in California, since 2004.

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,

Nichole Dodge, BSN, RN, AMB-BC