

Testimony in support of HB 3402

Chair Holvey and members of the committee I've been a nurse for 20 years and having to pass medication, write and interpret doctor's orders, give medications and make fast, life and death decisions is impaired if you have been up and worked for 10, 12 hours on a shift. We wouldn't want our nurses to practice impaired by substances or mental problems. What makes lack of rest, overwork and exhaustion any different? We risk our nursing license, our health and risk law suits for the State of Oregon if we cannot practice safely—not to mention the health of our patients of course. There have been some days recently that I have gone to bed exhausted and have gotten up still tired because of being mandated 4 hours over my shift.

I also have driven home from being mandated, tired and this is scary. Many of us nurses drive from Walla Walla, Umatilla, LaGrande, Athena etc.... as we are a rural community. I bet some of the nurses at EOPC also drive from Portland, or even Eugene to work there. All of the other institutions such as Deer Ridge, Snake River, Two Rivers probably have many commuters. I would just really appreciate our Legislators showing the Corrections Nurses that they value us by following the lead of the other nursing facilities such as hospitals, nursing homes etc.. that value their nurses and want to increase retention by only allowing the 2 hours mandate. This only makes sense. Why on earth would the corrections nurse be exempt. We run like a hospital and emergency room. Every day and night we see emergencies—we must be healthy and alert in order to make critical decisions. Please convey these messages to the Legislators. We really should be valued as much as other Oregon nurses.

Thank you so much, Debbie Runnion, RN,BSN