

Good Morning,

I am a Nursing Instructor at Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton, Oregon. I wanted to give my support and testimony for this bill. Being a new nurse educator, I think that I can offer a unique perspective. I started teaching January of 2018. As a registered nurse in the hospital I made quite a bit more than I do now as an educator. Part of that comes from having been a BSN prepared nurse and working at a facility that paid 5% more for that distinction. The other factor being that I worked only 36 hours a week and kept work at work instead of bringing it home with me. The same cannot be said now.

I have a Master's of Nursing Education degree. While most would look at the pay difference between a nurse educator and floor nurse (2016 data states the average nurse educator in Oregon is making \$70,708 and an RN \$81,484) and determine that the \$10,000 difference just accounts for the fact that nurse educators generally only work 9 months whereas RNs work a full 12 months, that is not exactly true. There are a lot of other factors that play into that. I will highlight some of those factors.

- You can practice as an Associate Degree RN after two years in a nursing program and the pay is generally the same across the board (in some facilities BSN prepared nurses make 5% more)
- RNs work on average 36 hours a week for the above stated salary
- I had to go to 6 years of schooling to receive my MSN degree, during those six years I accrued student loan debt that I will be paying on for a very long time
- While I do work only a 9 months out of the year, on average I work 50-60 hours a week and utilize my summers for course/curriculum review and fine tuning as I do not have time for this during the school year
- I work in a rural area, while the cost of living is less, so is the income.
- We have a staff of 4 faculty and our Nursing Program Director. One member of our faculty will be retiring at the end of this year. Another one of our faculty is only BSN prepared and therefore requires oversight by an MSN prepared instructor for all aspects of instruction, further adding to our workload.
- With such a small faculty even losing just one has a huge impact. The current nursing shortage will only get worse as more of the aging population of nurse educators retire with no one willing to take such a pay cut to take their place. With less faculty, each nursing program is able to take less students further perpetuating the shortage.

This is just a very small look into what is a huge problem. Having such an incentive as this bill would allow, would go a long way toward helping with not only the nursing shortage in general but the shortage of nurse educators as well.

Toni Bleick RN, MSN

Nursing Instructor

Pendleton, OR 97801

Office: (541)278-5880 |