

Submitter: Kendra Shannon

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business

Measure: SB1549

Hello, my name is Kendra Shannon and I am a current resident of Oregon and a nurse in good standing of my license through Oregon. I am an Agency Nurse employed with Integrated Healthcare Staffing. The wage that is set per Integrated is fair. Agency nurses do a lot of traveling to facilities of all types to fill shifts throughout Oregon and other states; quite a few shifts filled are last minute critical needs, which takes an immense toll on us mentally and physically. Nurses are severely short staffed nation wide and many of us are not paid hazard pay, and have not had help when we were unable to work because of being infected with the Covid-19 virus. Without the wage mu agency sets, I would not be able to work and pay my bills. My shifts get cancelled last minute and then I am unable to work the rest of the day, which creates stress and worry about finances and whether or not I will be able to work the next day. Stress such as this is detrimental to many nurses' well being and state of mind.

Many of the facilities I have worked at, I am grossly overworked, I rarely get my 30 minute uninterrupted lunch, I care for 20 to 40 patients at one time and sometimes more, patients and their families take their frustrations and stress out on the nursing staff and this decreases morale and can cause depression since we are already exhausted, hungry, and trying to survive until our shift is over, and at the end of the day we are always doing the best and doing right by our patients to increase their quality of life and help them rehabilitate to go home. We monitor our patients to be certain they are stable, they are progressing and getting better in their therapy and treatment, and we do all of this at the cost of our own health and well being. Not every facility we travel to is welcoming and friendly. Agency nurses do face discrimination when we are learning a new facility inside and out. Nurses who have worked at one facility for years frown upon us and call us stupid when we ask when their medication room is, or when we don't know where to find the syringes or creams because not every facility is built the same. We're sometimes given the worse assignment because we are looked at as temporary even when we go back to that facility on contract for a month or longer. When we ask for help, we don't always get it. In my experience, I have been left to sink on my own because I was not given help when I asked for it, and I ask for help more than once when I really need it. This hurts me to know that I wasn't able to do my best for a patient because I had improper tools or lack of nursing support from the facility's staff. There has never been anyone who checks on us to make sure the nursing staff is healthy in mind and in body. We break down our bodies with lifting and transferring very heavy patients. I have had to help lift a 300 pound patient and my back was hurt. This put me out of work for a short while. If not for my wage set by my agency, I would not have had enough money in my savings account to survive the time I was out of work to heal. As an

agency nurse that has been through plenty of hell in the last 3 years, please do not take away our livelihood. Please do not take away my Agency's ability to set a fair wage for me as their agency nurse.