

Submitter: Nurse Buttons

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business

Measure: SB1549

As a nurse who has worked at OHSU for over 12 years, and more specifically through the pandemic, I am disheartened to learn that my state is looking to jump on board the ill advised bandwagon to “cap staffing agencies charges”. Right now we need all the nurses we can get because many of the hospitals aren’t compensating their staff for the amount of work that they’re being asked to perform. Instead of capping staffing agencies charges, which ultimately means wages for travel RNs, we should be using our energy to try and find ways to bring nurses back into the profession or even just keep them! We are over worked and significantly under paid and the staff keeps leaving for travel assignments because they’re adequately compensated for the work that’s being done. Instead of capping “travel agencies” why aren’t you discussing capping the wages of the executives who aren’t risking their lives to care for the numerous individuals who’ve chosen to spread COVID by choosing to be unvaccinated? Why aren’t you discussing capping the cost of pharmaceutical drugs who gouge the hospital AND the patients and not the nurses who administer the prescribed medications? You are trying to put a bandaid on a hole in a bucket when you really need to just turn off the spigot! Nurses, regardless of whether they’re staff or agency, deserve whatever pay they are making because there’s a shortage! Inflation is real... there aren’t enough nurses to go around. If you restrict their pay here they’ll go elsewhere causing an even worse situation than we already have. We need everyone on board... and the hospital administration need to figure out how to keep their staff instead of pointing fingers! Nurses just got dealt a huge blow with the pandemic, as if they haven’t had a hard enough time fighting for themselves forever, and you’re looking to minimize a small piece of comfort we all deserve! Don’t call us Heroes when you just continue to make our jobs harder and harder. Support us, support safe staffing, let us do our job and focus on taking down the real evils in this country!

-Nurse Buttons