



February 8, 2023

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association. ONA is Oregon's oldest and largest nursing union and professional association, and we are proud to represent 15,000 health care providers, including RNs, advanced practice nurses, and allied health workers. I am writing in opposition to HB 2089.

Our nurses have been increasingly treating patients who are experiencing mental and behavioral health crises. This is true for those who work specifically in behavioral and mental health care in hospitals like Unity and OHSU, but it's also true for our nurses who do not hold such specializations and are treating the general population. Our nurses do their best to serve all patients and provide them with the resources they need, but they consistently tell us that there are simply not enough supports for all those who need them. Therefore, we stand in opposition to HB 2089. It would significantly reduce funding for behavioral health and addiction recovery services in Oregon, taking an estimated \$60-\$80 million per biennium¹ from current, critical mental health and addiction treatment and prevention services, including housing.

HB 2089 would significantly reduce funding for existing Measure 110 life-saving services by *at least* \$40 million, including:

- Housing and employment assistance, including emergency sober housing for people who are pregnant, those escaping domestic violence, and other extremely vulnerable members of our communities;
- Overdose prevention services;
- Street outreach to homeless neighbors to get them connected to services;
- Programs that help keep families together;
- Peer support services; and
- Emergency access to low-barrier treatment.

HB 2089 would reduce funding for Oregon Health Authority Drug Treatment and Prevention Programs by more than \$22.5 million per biennium.

A study by OHSU revealed that Oregon's treatment capacity is still at only about half of what it should be to meet the tremendous need for services. Governor Kotek, Legislative leadership, and lawmakers across party lines all committed at the beginning of this session to address homelessness, addiction, and Oregon's behavioral health system. Diverting funds from these critical services would cause irreparable harm. Please oppose HB 2089.

Sincerely,

¹ 22.5 (25% of 90 million currently allocated by SB 755)
\$60 - \$80 million is based on Q3 marijuana revenue forecasts



Emerson Hamlin

Political Organizer, Oregon Nurses Association