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Attn: Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

My name is Lucas Laird and I am a nurse at St. Charles Medical Center, Bend.

It is impossible for me to say how many times in the last two years I have not had a nurse colleague available to cover my legally required rest and meal breaks. Five patient assignments during the day, with high acuity patients, with no break coverage is not safe staffing. I have also been opting to stay over on some shifts to help out with tasks and taking patient vitals because the night shift doesn't have enough nursing assistants; there have been shifts when the whole floor will only have 1 or 2 cna's for 50 patients. Is it any wonder that we are facing a staffing crisis born out of a failure to retain nurses and other staff? HB 2697 seeks to address this core cause of the staffing crisis by improving working conditions.

According to the 2022 NSI National Health Care Retention and RN Staffing Report, in the past 5 years, the average hospital turned over 100.5 percent of its workforce:

- In 2021, hospitals set a goal of reducing turnover by 4.8 percent. Instead, it increased 6.4 percent and ranged from 5.1 percent to 40.8 percent. The current average hospital turnover rate nationally is 25.9 percent, according to the report.
- While 72.6 percent of hospitals have a formal nurse retention strategy, less than half of those (44.5 percent) have a measurable goal.
- Overall, 55.5 percent of hospitals do not have a measurable nurse retention goal.
- Retirement is the number four reason staff RNs leave, and it is expected to remain a primary driver through 2030. More than half (52.8 percent) of hospitals today have a strategy to retain senior nurses. In 2018, only 21.6 percent had one.

So many hospitals simply do not have a plan for how to retain their nurses, and without passage of HB 2697, nurses fear that we will see the national trends continue to worsen here in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Lucas Laird