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House Bill 2697 Testimony

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

My name is Sandi Kellogg, I am a nurse educator/administrator for a community college in the Willamette Valley (Professional Member, ONA).

I am not submitting this statement as a college representative but as an individual who feels the effects of our state's ongoing staffing crisis.

Staffing issues are affecting clinical placement for nursing programs which means they are impacting our ability to train and place new nurses. We have had issues with not knowing until the 11th hour if our students will have the clinical placements they need. This is mostly due to entire units being staffed with traveling nurses which may or may not be qualified to take students onto their floors.

We have also had issues with students showing up to their clinical assignment to find out that, because of staffing issues, they are not able to stay at their assignment. We are then forced to find another area in the hospital willing to take the displaced student(s) or send them home. Neither of these situations is conducive to nursing student learning.

We are all being asked to increase our numbers to help address the critical issue of the nursing shortage but how can we do this when clinical sites are not guaranteed or canceled at the last minute?

Schools need to have a guarantee of student clinical placements in order to take in a full cohort of students otherwise that leaves the instructional institution in a vulnerable situation with that student. That is not possible to do with the staffing crisis we are currently facing. HB 2697 addresses a core component of this need; ensuring that units have the staff they need for both patients and students.

Thank you for considering this important bill.

Sandi Kellogg