

February 15, 2023

**To Oregon Behavioral Health and Healthcare Committee
Support for HB 2701**

Chair Nosse, Vice-chair Goodwin, Vice-chair Nelson, and Committee members,

My name is Sarah Creson and I am a nurse at St. Charles Medical Center, Bend. I have worked at St. Charles Medical Center 20 years and recently changed departments due to burnout.

I was a charge nurse in my previous unit for over 8 years. Regularly, (more often than not), over the past 3 years we were short staffed and/or unsafely staffed to give adequate or safe care to patients. Our core staff was routinely floated to other units and this meant that, even when we had enough staff to safely provide patient care, we were not allowed to keep them on our unit. Usually, we would be forced to float both CNA and RN staff, leaving our unit without lunch or break coverage and additionally understaffed.

Nurses would have to take a 4-5 patient load regardless of patient acuity it became common practice for us to celebrate when we were able to get even a single meal break, even though St Charles should provide enough staff to allow for meal/rest breaks, since that is currently Oregon law!

I couldn't take it anymore.

I became bitter, burnt out, stressed and ill more often. It was NOT sustainable, and I feared for the safety of my staff, my license and my mental/physical health.

My story is not uncommon; in fact, most nurses in acute care settings have the exact same stories of strain, pressure, stress, and burnout. HB 2697 includes a range of mechanisms that will have a dramatic impact on the daily lives of nurses, and the care we provide our patients.

Please pass HB 2697.

Thank you for your work to support nurses.

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