

Submitter: Susan Long

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2697

February 25, 2023

To House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care,

My name is Susan Long, I am a staff nurse, inpatient chemotherapy nurse at St Charles Medical center in Bend, Oregon. This is my 43rd year as such. I have seen the role of the registered nurse change and the acuity of the average medical patient now, was the ICU patient of 1980. Advancements in medicine mean hospitalized patients are sicker, complex mobility concerns, fall and skin breakdown prevention mandates, complex medications, frequent changes and updates, multiple specialists, isolation and infection prevention needs, and complicated discharge plans or long waits to a discharge facility. In addition, families deserve updates, nursing is who they ask first. All of this care is being provided for those who expect to recover, and along side is the complex emotional care for those we can not save, and the families saying their goodbyes.

The Covid pandemic shed light on a crisis that was brewing under the surface in health care. Each staff person from the janitorial staff to the doctor impacts patient outcomes. Acuity and knowledgeable staff are critical in safe patient care and improved patient outcomes, however hospitals are pushing the staff they have, adding more, with less support, even heroes, as they call us have a breaking point.

I often work my 12 hour shift without break or a designated lunch break. Support CNAs have too many patients to turn, toilet and feed, having as many as four RNs to answer to.

I ask each of you to think about the kind of care you want for yourself, your loved ones, care with knowledge, and compassion, the right staff for the acuity you need at the bedside, and I ask you to support HB2697. Please support us as the heroes you say we are!

Thank you,
Susan Long