



February 26, 2023

To: Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, Members of the House Committee
On Behavioral Health and Health Care

From: Nurses for Single Payer

Re: Support for House Bill 2697

My name is Betsy Zucker. I am a retired nurse practitioner, and represent the Board of Nurses for Single Payer.

Our organization Nurses for Single Payer strongly encourages your support for HB 2697, to respond to the crisis in Oregon's health care workforce, and to protect health care workers and patients from the dire consequences of chronic understaffing.

We experience firsthand the strain and stress which understaffing creates for ourselves, our co-workers, and our friends who are nurses. First and foremost, nurses function as patient advocates. But without adequate staffing, we don't have the resources to make sure that every patient receives the excellent care that they deserve and which we want to provide. When we have to take care of too many patients, or work too much overtime, or skip meals and breaks, patient care suffers.

The evidence is clear that adequate staffing improves patient outcomes, and saves lives.

We are pushing back on the idea that hospitals can't provide adequate staffing. There are enough nurses in Oregon - but not enough to work under the current conditions. When working conditions and staffing levels improve, hospitals will be much more likely to recruit and retain nurses.

As an organization, Nurses for Single Payer believes that health care should be provided to all as a public good. When we advocate for improved working conditions for

ourselves as nurses, we are also advocating for safe health care facilities for everyone in the community. We join community members, advocates, and other health care workers in support of this bill.