

Submitter: LavendarTrees DeMello
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure: HB2697
LavenderTrees DeMello
3303 SE Roswell St.
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RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2697

To the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

My name is LavenderTrees DeMello and I am a nurse at OHSU having worked over the last 2 decades in acute care, critical care, peri-op and case management.

We were told our staffing guidelines could not be met because they were declined by OHSU's financial folks; they don't want to pay for it. We were filing staffing variances, we had developed a safe staffing plan and this did nothing to get OHSU to hire the appropriate amount of nurses. Include mandatory over-time on top of it, well it hurts everyone, the staff and the patients. To learn that hospitals lobby for unsafe staffing practices is disheartening. It's exhausting to fight for appropriate staffing on top of doing the job. We come to nursing to help others, but they forget to tell you that you'll be doing more than just taking care of your patient, you'll be fighting for a safe environment as well. Ethically, it is exhausting. I have therefore left nursing after 2 decades in the industry. I love my job, but to be run like a corporation looking for profits - making hundreds of millions yearly, but not providing the appropriate staff - is not in line with my ethics. Fighting for safe staffing over massive profits shouldn't have to be part of our job, but it is. We know that everyone is allowed health care.

This should include a safe environment with appropriate staffing. I'd rather find a way to make a difference in a more positive way, rather than become part of a money making machine that turns it's back on nurses. It is a morally exhausting place to be while caring for those most in need. Causes of this crisis including requiring minimum safe nurse staffing and enforcement of legally required rest and meal breaks. The problem in Oregon is not that we don't have enough nurses. Why are we saying it has to be part of the job to work in these conditions? Is it ok to put those needing care in this environment? Please, help nurses and our patients by passing HB 2697.

Sincerely yours,

LavenderTrees DeMello