

Submitter: Matthew Hoctor, PharmD, RPh
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure: HB 2697

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2697

To the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care:

I'm a pharmacist in the Portland area, and am writing to you in support of HB 2697. I believe this legislation will reduce staffing-related medication errors, preserve and promote the nursing workforce in the state, and most importantly improve patient outcomes.

Unsafe nursing staff ratios are associated with a variety of poor patient outcomes, including medication errors, falls, and death.¹⁻³ Furthermore it is a systematic and self-reinforcing problem which cannot adequately be addressed without legislation. Inadequate staffing increases workload by increasing patients' length of stay and readmission rates, while simultaneously decreasing nursing supply via burnout.²⁻⁴ California passed safe staffing legislation in 2004, resulting in one fewer patient per nurse, lower mortality, and less burnout.⁵ With even greater pressures placed on healthcare personnel in the present day, it is important that we follow their example.

The bill could go further to protect nurses and patients by further specifying the complaint procedures OHA will implement. Nurses and the public would be best served if nurses were explicitly empowered to submit complaints directly to OHA, and were protected by whistle-blower protections specified by this legislation.

Please pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Matthew Hoctor, PharmD

Selected Citations:

1. Recio-Saucedo A, Dall’Ora C, Maruotti A, et al. What impact does nursing care left undone have on patient outcomes? Review of the literature. *J Clin Nurs*. 2018;27(11-12):2248-2259. doi:10.1111/jocn.14058
2. Kane RL, Shamliyan TA, Mueller C, Duval S, Wilt TJ. The Association of Registered Nurse Staffing Levels and Patient Outcomes: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Med Care*. 2007;45(12):1195-1204. doi:10.1097/MLR.0b013e3181468ca3
3. Lasater KB, Aiken LH, Sloane DM, et al. Is Hospital Nurse Staffing Legislation in the Public’s Interest? *Med Care*. 2021;59(5):444-450. doi:10.1097/MLR.0000000000001519
4. Lasater KB, Aiken LH, Sloane DM, et al. Chronic hospital nurse understaffing meets COVID-19: an observational study. *BMJ Qual Saf*. 2021;30(8):639-647. doi:10.1136/bmjqs-2020-011512
5. Aiken LH, Sloane DM, Cimiotti JP, et al. Implications of the California Nurse Staffing Mandate for Other States. *Health Serv Res*. 2010;45(4):904-921. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6773.2010.01114.x