



Local 7901

AFL-CIO

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2/28/2023

To: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
From: A.J Mendoza, CWA Local 7901 president
Re: Support for HB 2697

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

My name is A.J. Mendoza, and I serve as the elected president of the Communications Workers of America Local 7901. Our Union represents nearly 700 working people across Oregon and Washington at telecommunications companies, labor organizations, nonprofits, and banks - and I am writing in my capacity as a Representative of CWA Local 7901 to voice our Union's strong **support for HB 2697**, which would enshrine safe staffing standards for nurses into state law.

It is truly an obscenity to hear that now there are healthcare executives taking a keen interest in having conversations to dissuade legislators from supporting safe staffing. It boggles the mind to wonder what sort of ghoulishly complicated arguments their ilk might try to spin behind closed doors - but to be clear- the same **pandemic profiteers** who (prior to COVID-19) blessed Oregon's working class with '*lean staffing* all hospitals to the nth degree forever!'... are *not* actually credible ... and the choice to support HB 2697 is not difficult.

I have been a Kaiser member most of my life and am proud as a Union officer to represent the workers in **the OFNHP Staff Union**. The glimpses that these windows - both as a patient and a Unionist- have provided me into the working realities of Oregon's nurses is far from complete... but has been enough to make it abundantly clear to me that the choice to stand with Oregon's nurses is the choice to stand with Oregon's working class communities.

As an Oregonian I feel a debt of gratitude to nurses who have done the healing work they are called to do in the horrific context of the pandemic. Each one should be lauded... and absolutely **none** should be worked to such an undignified pace as to need to forgo rest and meal breaks. I am persuaded that communities are stronger when we collectively act to end abuse of workers - *that* is the choice in front of this Committee.

In solidarity with Oregon's Union strong nurses, I urge you to support HB 2697.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AJM', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

A.J. Mendoza (He/him)
CWA Local 7901 president