

Submitter: Nicole Brun-Cottan

On Behalf Of: OFNHP AFT 5017

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2697

My name is Nicole Brun-Cottan and I am Vice Chair of the Professional Bargaining unit for the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals. By trade I am an Acute and Critical Care Physical Therapist, which means that what I do for a living is show up on peoples worst days, and help them function. I worked in a hospital during the pandemic. I worked in a hospital last weekend.

When we talk about healthcare right now in this state and in this country, we are talking about largely multi- billion-dollar corporations, that's billion with a B. Many of them are nonprofit corporations, which just means they don't pay taxes. They extract resources for profit, and the resources they have settled on, in this case, is sick people, and of course, the people like me, who take care of them.

The people who represent these massive concentrations of capital, have perfected the dog and pony show that makes their calculus seem reasonable. But what they have not managed to do, for all their highly paid executives and burgeoning layers of administrators, is to actually administer hospitals in a way that is safe and sustainable for our communities and this critical workforce. By which I mean to make sure that we are stocked with things like IV tubing, and Ativan, and peanut butter, not to mention the staff to provide the basic care that we knew were crucial to health in the 1850's, like the ability to have a bath under hot running water, or meals that are delivered at regularly scheduled intervals.

These people are the architects of the mess we are in. They made the choices that got us here. If left unchecked, they will continue to run their business on the backs of people like me, who to show up for work because we believe that when people are sick and scared, or their families are sick and scared, that someone should be there to help. Because that's what you'd want and expect, right, if it was your family?

We need change. And the hospitals would have you believe that the change we are asking for, will collapse the system. But that system is already in freefall, and this bill is a real intervention to hold them accountable and begin to course correct.

Let's try something else.