

Submitter: Nathan Weiler

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2697

In 2008 I began my career as a nurse. I love the work I do in the Seaside Oregon emergency department, as bargaining unit chair for ONA and as a volunteer firefighter. It is rare that I would submit something like this to support political changes. But it has become apparent that hospitals I have worked for over the years are working to decrease nurse's buying power and benefits in order to drive up profits while inflating administrative compensation at an incredible rate. Providence in the contract immediately prior to the pandemic managed to slip past our union what many of my coworkers and I consider theft of thousands of earned illness hours in changing from a split bank of vacation and sick leave to a single paid time off earning without rollover. Thousands of hours nurses had earned to take care of themselves and their family vanished in the face of the pandemic. And so did our personal protective equipment. Our hospital has, along with many others, decreased in safety in part due to a change in our country. Through proposed staffing changes our hospital wishes to implement that is likely to continue as long as safety being low allows profit to be high. This bill is one that will tell hospitals they are responsible, especially after purchasing nursing schools, to motivate people to both remain and become nurses through better wages, benefits and workplace protection in the face of increasing stress and danger. Please pass this bill for yourself and the people you care about.