

Submitter: Alison Lewis
On Behalf Of: All Nurses
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure: HB2665

As a nurse that weathered a staff job in a hospital here in Oregon both before and through the Covid pandemic, I have grown very weary of the demands of the job and the corporations taking advantage of us. Nurses continue working in worse and worse conditions year after year in most hospitals. As an attempt to salvage some of my career and sanity, I transitioned into a travel nursing role to take the pressure off of myself that comes with working for the same hospital. I am tired and not willing to invest my energy into corporations that choose to treat their nurses poorly. I went into travel nursing to lengthen my bedside nursing career. I love nursing and taking care of others. However, working for the hospital came at an expense to myself. As a travel nurse, I get to help the staffing crisis while still taking care of myself as I see fit, by not committing to one hospital. Without this ability, I would certainly leave bedside nursing.

It has been really hard to see how the public thinks that nurses should sacrifice themselves day in and out on the job with no say about our pay rates or working conditions. I find bill's like this to be a slap in the face to nurses like myself. In a free market, jobs should pay what the demand is. It is certainly not my fault that hospitals are losing staff because they refuse to provide workable conditions for their nurses, and adequate pay raises to match the conditions or current inflation. To try to put a cap on ANYONE'S pay is not only detrimental to the field, but will simply force people like myself to leave the profession altogether. I am not a martyr, nor should I be expected to be. LIMITING WHAT AGENCIES CAN BILL WILL ONLY DRIVE TRAVEL NURSES TO OTHER STATES, worsening the labor shortage in hospitals that are already in crisis (whether they admit it or not). While I'm at it - why don't they simply pay their staff what they are worth?? I was receiving between 1 and maybe 2 percent raises in my staff job as an RN in my hospital. Is this appropriate? Is this enough? I watched new nurses come in with huge bonuses and then leave. I worked through the pandemic with no bonus or appreciation. Why should my pay be limited? Why do realtors make more than me? Give me a break. Fix the problem. Write a bill for safe nursing ratios in hospital. How about required breaks because I certainly have lacked those most of my career. This bill is a joke, an insult and a slap in the face. Please focus your energy on writing a bill for safe staffing in hospitals, with BREAK NURSES and maybe you might start to fix the root of the problem.