

Submitter: Christina Muniz

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2665

My name is Christina Muniz. I am a Registered Nurse here in Oregon. I am also the National Clinical Director for Express Healthcare Professionals, a healthcare staffing firm that places associates in facilities to help supplement staff as needed and a per diem nurse picking up hospital shifts across the Portland Metro area

I strongly oppose HB 2665 as it will have a poor impact on healthcare facilities, healthcare workers, patients, and their families in our community.

The short-staffing I see in facilities makes it clear that agency staff is needed to help supplement the staff that is already spread thin and taking on many patients at a time. Being an agency nurse is not easy. In addition to having to hit the ground running with little orientation and being expected to fall into place in a new facility, agency nurses are often not seen as peers by the staff they are there to support and provide help to. Agency nurses deserve to get paid fair wages without a cap for many reasons. They do not get the benefits and perks that staff get from their employers. They are required to be even more flexible and adaptable filling shifts last minute and being thrown into short staffing situations in unfamiliar facilities while still providing safe and competent care.

It's hard enough now to get associates into facilities to alleviate the staffing shortage. If wages are capped, agency nurses will go to other states where higher pay rates are offered. We will be in an even more critical situation, unable to provide care for our neighbors, parents, kids, and the rest of the community. It would be more than easy for any of us nurses to go to another state or across the river to Washington to work in facilities there.

I urge you to vote no on HB 2665. Our community deserves to have safe care and our nurses deserve to get pay that reflects their value.