



From: Joseph Martin

Date: 2/6/2024

RE: Support HB 4045 Public Safety Workforce Stabilization Act of 2024

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice Chair Lewis, Vice Chair Tran, and members of the committee,

My name is Joseph Martin and I am writing in support of HB 4045 Public Safety Workforce Stabilization to retain and recruit workers at the Oregon State Hospital (OSH) and 911 telecommunicators.

I am a resident of House District #22, Senate District #11. I began my career at OSH as a custodian.

I am a custodian at the Oregon State Hospital. I have worked at OSH for ten years. I work in the patient care environment but I am not regarded as direct care staff for the purpose of differentiating responsibilities and accountability. I work in the max security Harbors units. Custodians are labeled as medium contact despite being on the units with the patients. As a custodian it is my job to maintain a clean environment for the patients, entering their rooms and often having to convince reclusive or unpredictable patients who may be paranoid of the workers, to enter.

My job is complex in the sense of convincing people that are mentally ill and often unstable that I am there to help them while not being a "direct care staff" according to the job description. My job requires me to be able to work independently from the staff for most of the day which can expose me to situations where I am alone. The current clientele majority of OSH is aid and assist patients that are unable to participate in their own trial due to the severity of their mental illness.

In my time at OSH I personally have been assaulted several times. The custodians are not typically the target of hostile patients however it does happen too often. We are given a device to use in the event of potential danger to signal a security response a "code green". The response is often after there is an assault on the staff and not before. I have seen staff be sent

to the hospital due to injury inflicted by patients, my custodial co-workers have as well. It is not only traumatizing to be involved but to also be aware of what happened and now you have to try not to be the next. Law enforcement is exposed to hazardous situations everyday in the line of duty. We are the people that help pick up the pieces afterward.

I ask members of the committee to fully support HB 4045-1. We need the Legislature to support the workers at OSH so we can continue to do our jobs: serving patients.

Thanks for reading through to the end

Joseph Martin