

## **HB 4088 - Support the Safety of Emergency Nurses**

The emergency department has been described as one of the *most dangerous places to work* and up to 70% of emergency nurses experience physical abuse. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, healthcare workers consistently suffer 5 to 6 times the number of assaults than any other profession in the private business sector.

HB 4088 is the **eighth legislative bill since 2015** to address the violence epidemic that is happening in our Oregon hospitals and emergency departments.

Our own 2022 survey of Oregon emergency nurses revealed:

- 75% had frequently felt unsafe at work.
- 50% had been assaulted in the past year, ranging one to more than three times, with injuries ranging from scratches, bruising, pain.
- 52% of the time de-escalation techniques were used and 48%, there was no time or opportunity to de-escalate.
- 42% did not feel supported by their institution and 21% did not feel supported by law enforcement.
- 81% felt felony charges would help increase emergency department safety.

**House Bill 4088** is a comprehensive bill, addressing safety, prevention, and accountability.

### **Safety –**

- Requires signage addressing the safety of all people in a hospital.
- Requires signage addressing employees' rights.

### **Prevention –**

- Allows caregivers to have only their first name on their ID badge.
- Creates a grant program to help hospitals with violence prevention strategies.

### **Accountability –**

- Adds hospital workers to the list of professions that serve the public with enhanced felony penalties if they have been intentionally or knowingly injured by an assault.



- Requires hospitals to report injuries to the state of Oregon and make public the aggregate data.

Assaults on emergency department staff continue despite hospitals performing in-depth risk assessments, implementing environmental modifications, and providing extensive training of hospital staff on violence prevention and de-escalation. Emergency department staff are ***obligated by federal law*** to care for people regardless of their physical or mental state, which, by default, puts them at higher risk for assault and injury. It is our belief that without significant help and resources, the trend will continue, and ***nurses will continue to leave the profession in fear for their safety.***

We ask the committee to move HB 4088 bill forward with a “do pass” recommendation and we look forward to the success of this bill.

With Gratitude,

### **Oregon Emergency Nurses Association**

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