



Caring for Oregon

January 22, 2025

To: Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Bonham, Members of the Senate Committee On Labor and Business

From: Russell Lum, Political Organizer, Oregon Nurses Association

Re: **Opposition to SB 397**

Dear Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Bonham, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 397 on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). ONA is a professional association and labor union representing over 18,000 nurses and health care professionals across Oregon. Our members work in urban and rural hospitals, clinics, school-based health centers, county health departments, home health care, and more.

ONA firmly opposes SB 397 because Oregon has taken an approach to wage timekeeping that is more protective and more modern than federal regulation. Reverting to the federal standard would only put fair pay for workers at risk.

Employer timekeeping is electronic and sophisticated enough to pay workers for actual minutes worked. Allowing time-rounding so long as it complied with federal law would be an embrace of a vague standard that rests on asking the employer's system to balance out what that worker is owed over time (*29 CFR §785.48(b)*). Further, SB 397 takes aim at workers' ability to recoup lost wages due to a rounding system and the related penalty wages. The bill would make Oregon workplaces more prone to inconsistencies of payment, employer abuse as it relates to payment, and finally, confusion, since different workplaces would use different rounding methods.

Oregon should be a premier place to work. Oregon's working conditions should attract workers and retain them. In light of how difficult recruitment and retention has been in healthcare, it is especially important not to lose ground in areas where our working conditions are a national leader. Rigor applied to our meal and rest break standards and timekeeping standards is a theme to preserve with state law. Please do not advance SB 397.

Sincerely,
Russell Lum