

Submitter: Hope Lincoln
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2792

February 10, 2025

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2792

To the House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards:

My name is Hope Lincoln and I've been working as an oncology nurse at Providence Hood River for over 6 years. I am writing in support for HB 2792. Providence Hood River nurses have been working without a raise or contract since March of 2024, despite our union bargaining in good faith for over a year. As a last resort, we made the very difficult decision to go on strike on January 10th, along with over 4,000 Providence nurses across Oregon, in pursuit of a fair contract. It is beyond frustrating for the of us on strike to know that Oregon hospitals and health systems spend extravagantly on replacement workforces, with money that could be spent on a fair contract for their own nurses.

Nurses don't want to go on strike. We don't take the decision lightly, to leave our posts and the responsibilities we have to our patients and teams. It's also intimidating to put our livelihoods in jeopardy while we stand up for the populations we serve and in concern for the quality of this Oregon healthcare system on which we all rely. However, I truly believe that this strike was necessary, as our employer absolutely refuses to prioritize safety, workers' voice, and core concerns for healthcare sustainability like recruitment and retention.

When a strike occurs, hospital systems tend to blame the workers for straining hospital operations, workforce morale, and transparency. Hospitals often spend significant resources to manage strikes and lockouts, yet these expenditures are not often reported, leaving the financial and ethical implications of hospital spending veiled from staff nurses and other workers. This lack of accountability undermines trust between hospitals, employees, and the public.

This policy, HB 2792, contributes to hospitals having to answer for their impact on their workers, the public, and their own bottom line. Oregonians deserve to know how their money is spent—especially if it's being misspent.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and I look forward to your support.

Hope Lincoln