

## **Testimony of Anne Tan Piazza**

Executive Director, Oregon Nurses Association

Before the Oregon State Legislature

In Support of House Bill 2792

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### **Chair and Members of the Committee,**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Anne Tan Piazza, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA), which represents more than 23,000 frontline healthcare professionals across this state. I am here today in strong support of House Bill 2792, which brings much-needed transparency to how hospitals spend money when they choose to replace striking healthcare workers rather than negotiate in good faith.

This bill is not just about financial reporting – it's about public accountability. Every year, Oregon's hospital systems receive hundreds of millions of dollars in public funds, whether through direct state and federal funding, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements, or tax breaks granted in exchange for their nonprofit status. These resources are meant to support patient care, keep hospitals running, and ensure Oregonians have access to the healthcare they need. Yet time and again, we see these same hospitals plead poverty when it comes to investing in their workforce, only to turn around and spend unknown sums on strike preparations and replacement workers in secret.

What do we actually know about how Oregon's largest hospital systems manage their finances when workers strike? Not much. And that's exactly the problem.

We don't know how much they pay out-of-state staffing agencies to find temporary workers.

We don't know how much they spend on travel, housing, food, and security for these workers.

We don't know how much money goes toward legal fees, PR firms, or crisis consultants hired to manage the fallout of a strike.

We don't know because they won't tell us.

What we do know is this: hospital executives will spare no expense when it comes to avoiding accountability for their financial choices.

While frontline nurses and healthcare professionals fight for safe staffing and fair wages, Oregon hospitals are writing blank checks to strike-breaking operations. At the same time, these same hospitals are cutting services, closing rural clinics, and passing on costs to patients, all while refusing to disclose how much they are spending to keep their workers out rather than bring them back in. That is not responsible financial stewardship. It is an abuse of public trust.

Transparency is a fundamental principle in public policy. We require public officials to disclose campaign contributions because we believe voters have a right to know who is funding their leaders.

We require school districts to report budgets publicly because we believe communities should know how their tax dollars are being used. And yet, hospitals, some of the largest recipients of public money in the state, are allowed to make financial decisions behind closed doors, with no obligation to report where the money is going.

This must change. House Bill 2792 is a simple, commonsense solution: if a hospital chooses to spend money on replacing striking workers, they must report it. That is not an unreasonable request. It is a necessary safeguard to ensure that our healthcare system is operating in the best interests of Oregonians, not just hospital executives.

Let me be clear: this bill is not about preventing hospitals from preparing for strikes. It is about ensuring that when they do, they do so with full public accountability.

It is about ensuring that the dollars hospitals receive from taxpayers, patients, and insurance plans are being used transparently.

It is about ensuring that Oregon's hospitals are upholding their obligations as public-serving institutions.

It is about ensuring that we, as a state, are not allowing our healthcare system to be manipulated into a tool for union-busting, hidden behind financial secrecy.

The people of Oregon deserve better. House Bill 2792 is a step in the right direction. I urge you to pass this critical legislation.

**Thank you.**