

Submitter: Rachel Scholz  
On Behalf Of: ONA  
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2792

Testimony in Support of Hospital Transparency on Replacement Employee Costs,

Hello,

My name is Rachel Scholz, I am a Registered Nurse, and I am here to speak on the critical need for hospitals to be fully transparent about the costs associated with hiring replacement or strike nurses when their regular nurses and healthcare providers go on strike. Transparency in healthcare spending is not just a matter of financial accountability—it is a matter of public trust, patient care, and responsible resource allocation.

When nurses and healthcare providers go on strike, it is often due to unsafe staffing levels, poor working conditions, or unfair wages—issues that directly impact patient safety and quality of care. Instead of addressing these concerns, many hospitals choose to hire expensive replacement nurses/staff through staffing agencies, often at rates that far exceed what they are willing to pay their own employees. These costs can reach millions of dollars in just a few days, yet hospitals frequently refuse to disclose how much they are spending, even though these funds ultimately come from patient care budgets, insurance premiums, and taxpayer dollars in some cases.

This lack of transparency raises serious concerns:

1. **Public Accountability** – As community institutions, hospitals should be required to disclose how much they are spending on replacement nurses versus investing in fair wages and safe staffing for their permanent workforce. Patients, staff, and the public deserve to know where healthcare dollars are going.
2. **Financial Priorities** – If a hospital can afford to pay double or triple the standard rate for temporary nurses, it raises the question: why not invest that money into retaining and fairly compensating the dedicated nurses who know the hospital, its patients, and its protocols?
3. **Patient Care & Safety** – Transparency would also highlight whether hospitals are prioritizing profits over patient care. Patients and their families have a right to know if their hospital is spending millions on temporary staff who may not be familiar with the facility, rather than addressing the root causes of the strike.
4. **Legislative Oversight** – Without financial transparency, policymakers cannot fully assess whether hospitals are making responsible financial decisions or if intervention is needed to prevent unnecessary disruptions in care.

By requiring hospitals to disclose their spending on strike replacement nurses and staff, we create an incentive for them to negotiate in good faith with their dedicated, permanent staff rather than relying on costly, short-term solutions that do not address the underlying issues. Transparency will promote accountability, improve decision-making, and ensure that resources are used in ways that genuinely benefit patients and frontline healthcare workers.

I urge lawmakers to support policies that require hospitals to be transparent about their spending on replacement nurses and staff. The public deserves to know, and our healthcare workers deserve better.

Thank you,  
Rachel Scholz