

Testimony in Support of HB 2792

Submitted by: Anna Karbel, RN

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Members of the Committee,

My name is Anna Karbel, and I am a Registered Nurse currently participating in a strike in Oregon. I am here to express my support for HB 2792, a bill that promotes transparency by requiring hospital systems to disclose the amount of money spent to replace employees involved in a strike or lockout. This bill is necessary to ensure transparency and provide a clear understanding of how resources are allocated during labor disputes, particularly within nonprofit hospital systems that receive public funding. As a nurse directly impacted by these dynamics, I believe HB 2792 is an essential step toward informed decision-making and trust within Oregon's healthcare system.

Why Transparency Matters

Nonprofit hospital systems, such as Providence, receive significant public funding intended to ensure equitable care for patients. While these systems are required to disclose many financial details, strike-related expenditures are not currently included. HB 2792 would fill this gap by providing specific data on how funds are being used during labor disputes.

For example, it is estimated that Providence is spending \$25.39 million per week on replacement nurses during this strike, with individual salaries ranging from \$7,000–\$10,000 per week, in addition to money for housing, food, and transportation. At the same time, the hospital has expressed concerns about financial constraints impacting its ability to meet safe staffing standards.

Transparency about these expenditures would allow:

- **Taxpayers** to see how public funds are being used.
- **Policymakers** to make informed decisions about systemic healthcare challenges.
- **Communities** to better understand the dynamics between healthcare providers and hospital administrators.

Benefits of HB 2792

This bill is not about assigning blame or creating division; it is about creating a foundation of trust and understanding. Transparency builds accountability and ensures that everyone—taxpayers, patients, workers, and hospital systems—has access to the same information.

For Taxpayers: Greater transparency ensures that public funds are being used efficiently and appropriately.

For Policymakers: Access to detailed financial information allows for more informed decisions when addressing systemic challenges, such as staffing shortages.

For Hospitals: Providing this information can help demonstrate their commitment to accountability and open communication with the communities they serve.

My Perspective as a Nurse

As a Registered Nurse, I am deeply committed to patient care and safety. Our strike has lasted for 32 days and centers on critical issues like safe staffing, which directly impacts patient outcomes. However, I believe this discussion goes beyond labor disputes. It is about ensuring that the public has the information necessary to evaluate whether resources are being used in ways that align with community and patient care needs.

HB 2792 would shed light on spending during these periods, enabling informed dialogue and fostering solutions to systemic issues.

I respectfully urge the committee to support HB 2792. Transparency is not about choosing sides; it is about creating a clearer picture of how our healthcare system functions during critical moments. This bill would provide valuable information to policymakers, taxpayers, and communities, ultimately benefiting everyone involved.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Anna Karbel, RN (she/her/hers)