

Submitter: Oregon social worker
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2792

Subject: Urgent Reforms Needed for Fair and Transparent Healthcare Labor Practice (HB 2792)

To the House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards,

I am writing to you as a concerned constituent and advocate for fair labor practices within our healthcare system. I respectfully request your attention and action on several critical issues that are undermining both the integrity of our healthcare system and the well-being of the workers who keep it running.

1. Transparency in Replacement Worker Costs:

Healthcare systems must be open and honest about the cost of replacement workers. This transparency is essential for accountability and for ensuring that any decisions made regarding staffing and budgeting are fair to all parties involved.

2. Unfair Contract Practices:

It is deeply troubling that healthcare workers often face delayed contract negotiations, only to be met with refusals for retroactive pay. This not only undermines trust but creates a financial incentive for healthcare systems to prolong negotiations at the expense of workers' livelihoods. Such practices are unjust and demand immediate legislative intervention.

3. Misplaced Blame During Strikes:

When healthcare workers strike to protest unsafe labor practices, the system frequently shifts the blame onto the workers by citing stress or a decline in patient care quality. In reality, these strikes are a direct response to unsafe and unsustainable working conditions. It is imperative that responsibility is correctly attributed to systemic failures rather than to the courageous actions of workers fighting for their rights.

4. Executive Accountability:

The exorbitant salaries of chief executive officers and operating officers—earning multi-million dollar compensations annually—stand in stark contrast to the compensation and working conditions of frontline healthcare workers. There must be a mechanism, such as a licensing process, to hold these top executives accountable, ensuring that their leadership is aligned with ethical practices and the well-being of

both employees and patients.

5. Access to Unemployment Benefits for Striking Workers:

Finally, healthcare workers who are compelled to strike under unsafe and unjust working conditions should not be penalized by being denied access to unemployment funds. Guaranteeing such access is critical to safeguarding the financial stability of those who risk their livelihoods to demand a safer and fairer workplace.

I urge you to consider these points and work expediently toward comprehensive reforms that promote transparency, accountability, and fairness within our healthcare system. By addressing these issues, we can support the dedicated healthcare workers who are essential to our communities and ensure that our system is both sustainable and just.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your response and to seeing positive changes that prioritize the rights and welfare of our healthcare professionals.

Oregon social worker