

Submitter: Carrie Guerru RN
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2792

RE: Support for HB 2792

To the House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards,

As an Oregonian, a voter, a mother, a wife, and a charge nurse in Providence Portland's emergency department, it is with deep sadness and a heavy heart that I find myself in this position. Yet, here I am, standing with my fellow healthcare workers, driven to speak out because we can no longer remain silent. We are on strike, standing in the cold, because our hospital system has failed to negotiate with us in good faith. And now, we are asking for your support.

In addition to being a full time nurse — I am an active, dedicated member of this community. I retrained later in life to become a nurse and graduated during the peak of the COVID pandemic, working on a COVID isolation floor as a new graduate. Over the years, I've worked hard to continue my professional development, training in disaster management, and now serve as the night charge nurse in the emergency department on most weekends. Every day, I show up to a workplace that is more dangerous than ever, where I am expected to do more with fewer resources.

The work we do is vital, and I've always had a strong moral compass that drives me to care for the most vulnerable in our community. I am increasingly finding it difficult to follow my calling with the harsh realities of a healthcare system that is placing both staff and patients at risk. We are asked to do the impossible and are made to feel expendable — nothing more than a number on a payroll. And for what? The promise of more work, more stress, and more responsibility with little to no appreciation.

The challenge we face is about more than just fair wages — it's about ensuring safety, sustainability, and the future of our healthcare system. Right now, out-of-state workers are being brought in to care for Oregonians — workers who are unfamiliar with our community and its specific needs. The money spent on these expensive, contracted replacements could be better invested in supporting local nurses who are dedicated to providing high-quality care. We need Oregonians on the front lines — people who truly understand the community they serve and share our values.

I know that some may say, "Just go back to work. Cross the picket line." But the solution is not that simple. We deserve to be safe, to be compensated fairly for the

critical work we do, and to have a healthcare plan that protects our well-being — one that ensures we are not left without care in the very hospitals where we serve.

Both of my children were born at Providence Portland and today they stand with me on the picket lines. They are learning the importance of fighting for fairness, standing up for what's right, and never backing down in the face of adversity. These lessons are powerful and will stay with them forever.

Now, I am asking for your help. Our healthcare workers deserve better. Our families deserve better. Our communities deserve better. Together, we can turn the tide. Let's stand with Oregon's healthcare workers and ensure that those who care for us have the support they need to keep providing the high-quality care we all deserve.

Please, help us in this fight. Let's bring fairness, respect, and care back to our healthcare system.

Sincerely,
Carrie, RN