



Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Good morning Chair, Vicechair and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is David Lynch and I am Mental Health Registered Nurse at the Oregon State Hospital where we provide treatment focused on hope, safety and recovery. I have been working at the Oregon State Hospital for 13 years and a half years. And have been the union president for the RN's and Nurse practitioners for the past 8.

The Oregon State Hospital provides clinical and patient wrap-around services for individuals who require psychiatric evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment, as well as community outreach and peer support.

The work we perform at OSH is unique and comes with its own challenges. We care about our patients and want to be present for them in every way. There are countless stories about workers being severely injured while on the job by patients experiencing a mental health crisis.

I'm one of them. April will mark 4 years since my traumatic brain injury. 6 months of constant medical appointments. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, neurologists, neuro optometrists, MRI's. Explaining why dada has to wear sunglasses inside and isn't safe to be left alone with you anymore.



Yet, many of us return to OSH and show up for the patients. Our jobs are not easy. With few incentives, I experience firsthand how recruitment and retention is extremely difficult.

Current statute does not allow claims from employees from the State Hospital or SACU to be compensable for PTSI. Passage of this bill would mean there would need to be persuasive medical evidence from a psychiatrist or psychologist that the employee has satisfied the diagnostic criteria for PTSD or acute stress disorder, and it is presumed that the diagnosed PTSD or acute stress disorder is work related.

This bill unlocks resources for workers and provides a path for healing when their injuries are caused on the job. Thank you for your consideration and I hope you can support the workers who care for the most acute and vulnerable individuals in the state of Oregon.