



## Caring for Oregon

February 19, 2025

To: Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, Members of the House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards

From: Russell Lum, Political Organizer, Oregon Nurses Association

Re: **Support of HB 3187**

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, and members of the committee,

Thank you for receiving this testimony on House Bill 3187 on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). ONA represents a diverse community of more than 23,000 nurses and healthcare professionals throughout Oregon. Together we use our collective power to advocate for critical issues impacting patients, nurses, and healthcare professionals including a more effective, affordable and accessible healthcare system; better working conditions for all healthcare professionals; and healthier communities.

Oregon's nurses and healthcare workers are every age, from new grads to people who have been at the bedside for 40+ years. This is a workforce diversity that benefits patients and facilities. Older nurses, bringing irreplaceable experience, should be caring for patients — under working conditions and treatment that can retain them and provide fairness and dignity. Older nurses, like all older workers, should not be vulnerable to mistreatment that the law has not yet caught up to defining as discrimination.

HB 3187 clarifies that introducing common proxies for age qualifies as age discrimination. This change will protect more workers, and solves the problem of the courts' reticence to interpret existing law as protective. The bill also ensures fairness for older workers at the beginning of the hiring process, by prohibiting employers from requiring applicants to disclose age, date of birth, or graduation date prior to completing a first interview.

ONA joins the many advocates asking you to advance anti-discrimination with the passage of this fix to workplace discrimination law. In our context in the healthcare sector, with a statewide need of higher staffing, we need a maximum share of willing, licensed healthcare professionals to be in the field — if recruitment, retention, and fair treatment can keep them there.

HB 3187 takes clear steps toward making work settings in Oregon more equitable and as well as more promising for high employment and workforce stability. Thank you for opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,  
Russell Lum