



February 17, 2025

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. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support for HB 3363, this concept would clarify the existing Oregon statute which directs DAS to create a PERS cap that reflects a "reasonable expectation" of the overtime hours served.

The high turnover among staff leads to unsafe working conditions. Among nurses and other colleagues, we've received reports of ongoing and unremitting stress of managing understaffed units, a faster pace of rapid admissions, shorter patient stays and earlier discharges with a more acutely ill patient population. Our clients face many challenges, such as psychosis, paranoia, past traumas, and maladaptive behaviors that can lead to violence. These behaviors can lead to assaults on other patients or even staff. The high levels of stress and anxiety persist even after leaving the facility and takes a toll on our families.

There are periods of time where staff are forced against their will to work additional hours as mandatory overtime. This past summer nursing staff averaged over 1,000 hours of mandatory overtime a week. The high number of mandatory overtime hours worked is a result of lack of staffing in order to meet patient needs. For example, our members who show up at 12:30 PM on a Saturday for a 10 hour shift, need to anticipate being mandated until 5 AM Sunday. Then after staying until 5 in the morning, you may be required to be back at work Sunday afternoon, and may get mandated again until 5 AM Monday morning. Mentally, physically, emotionally you have to prepare yourself and your family.

The bill directs DAS to identify the cap based on an average of the actual overtime hours by class performed over the course of a calendar year. All overtime is included in the final calculation for Tier One and Tier Two PERS beneficiaries, but there is a cap of 300 overtime



hours for all Tier Three PERS employees. With the working conditions described above, it is typical for a direct care worker in a 24/7 facility to accrue 800 to 1000 hours of overtime in a calendar year. But only 300 hours of their accrued overtime is included in their final PERS benefit at the end of their careers.