



February 25, 2025

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services

From: Emerson Hamlin, Political Organizer, Oregon Nurses Association

Re: Support for HB 5023

Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama, and members of the committee:

My name is Emerson Hamlin, and I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). ONA represents a diverse community of more than 21,000 nurses and health care professionals throughout Oregon. Together, we use our collective power to advocate for a more effective, affordable and accessible health care system; better working conditions for all health care professionals; and healthier communities.

House Bill 5023 empowers the Oregon State Board of Nursing to increase licensure fees, which have not been updated since 2009. Since that point, OSBN expenditures have doubled, and the agency has increased by 14 positions. Allowing OSBN to increase licensure fees will not only ensure OSBN's financial stability, but adequately staff the investigations department. Currently, a case can take two years to complete, which is unfair to both nurses and the public; with additional investments, that timeline will be made shorter.

ONA is fully supportive of HB 5023. Our healthcare system needs a governing body for Oregon nurses that is resourced to quickly license qualified applicants, provide guidance when questions arise relating to scope of practice or the Nurse Practice Act, and complete disciplinary proceedings. These actions ensure that nurses are providing high-quality, appropriate, and safe healthcare to Oregonians. ONA urges a yes vote. Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Emerson Hamlin