

**TRAVIS NELSON**  
**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
HOUSE DISTRICT 44  
NORTH/NORTHEAST PORTLAND



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**Testimony in Support for SB 1168**

Chair Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

My name is Travis Nelson, and I am the State Representative for House District 44 North and Northeast Portland. I know firsthand the dedication it takes to care for patients, not just in hospitals, but in their homes, where healing can be deeply personal, and where life's final moments deserve dignity.

Home health and hospice nurses and clinicians are an invisible backbone of our healthcare system. These providers offer diverse services, from wound care to mental health counseling. Their work comes with challenges, including long travel times and unpredictable home environments. They drive miles between patients, step into homes of all kinds, and navigate complex family dynamics, all to ensure that people receive the care they need. But right now, they're being asked to choose between quality care and making ends meet.

Under the current system, caregivers are pressured to take on as many patients as possible, sometimes skipping over those who need the most care because they simply do not have the time. It's not because they do not want to help, it is because they're being forced into a system that values speed over compassion, numbers over people and profits over patients.

SB 1168 ensures that home health and hospice clinicians, like their nursing counterparts, are no longer paid on a per-visit basis. By shifting compensation to hourly or salaried pay, the bill ensures caregivers are fairly compensated for all aspects of their work, including travel, coordination, and supply management, preventing them from avoiding complex cases or providing adequate care due to financial constraints. Additionally, it protects providers from punitive productivity metrics that pressure them to rush care, allowing them to focus on delivering high-quality, patient-centered services.

We're seeing sicker patients being sent home earlier and we are seeing burnout drive caregivers away from this work. In fact, hospice turnover rates have been rising since 2019, reaching 26% in 2023, highlighting ongoing retention challenges in the industry. But, what we are really seeing, is the consequences of a system that prioritizes efficiency over care. We have the chance to adjust and change that. It is important that we stand with the people who show up for our most vulnerable and do this work, because patient care should always come first.

Thank you,

State Representative Travis Nelson  
House District 44, North/NE Portland