

Submitter: April Milan  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB916

Testimony in Support of SB 916-A  
April Milan, Physical Therapist & OFNHP 5017 Member

My name is April Milan. I'm a physical therapist and a proud member of OFNHP 5017. I'm here today to express my strong support for SB 916, as amended (-A)—a crucial bill that would repeal the current law preventing workers on strike from accessing unemployment benefits.

This legislation is deeply personal to me. As a union healthcare worker, I've experienced the stress and uncertainty that comes when an employer proposes an unfair contract. In my case, the proposed pay scale was 30% below the community standard—far lower than what current employees earn. Our union stood together to reject that offer, because we believe healthcare professionals deserve fair pay that reflects our training, expertise, and commitment to our patients.

Had we been forced to strike, many of us—including clinicians like myself—would have faced an impossible choice: fight for what's right or feed our families. No worker should be put in that position.

The -A amendment strengthens SB 916 and ensures that workers on strike for more than seven days would finally have access to the unemployment benefits they need to survive. This support would allow us to pay rent, buy groceries, afford prescription medications, and maintain COBRA healthcare coverage while standing up for fair contracts. It also means we wouldn't be pressured into accepting unsafe or unjust terms simply because employers know they can starve us out.

Let's be clear: striking is always a last resort. No one wants to walk off the job. But when workers are pushed to that point, we deserve the financial security to stand in solidarity without risking everything.

SB 916-A would restore dignity and fairness to Oregon's workforce. It's time we align our laws with our values—respect for working people, and a belief in justice on the job.

Please vote YES on SB 916-A. Thank you for your time and for standing with workers.

Sincerely,  
April Milan

Physical Therapist  
Proud Member, OFNHP 5017