

Submitter: Kait S
On Behalf Of: Oregonian Families and Nurses
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Good Afternoon,

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify our positions on the bill. The reasons why I oppose this bill are: 1) The increase in taxes, especially in payroll taxes. I am a RN and I enjoy working here since Oregon respects a safe nurse to patient ratio. As a medical surgical nurse, I have worked in other states and the nurse: patient ratio is 1: 6-9. Here, it's 1:4. I am blessed to be able to currently support my family of 5 on one income (unfortunately, not many families can currently say the same). However, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to do so---over the past 10 years, my income tax has increased from 31% to currently almost 40%. How do you expect families to support their loved ones if this gets any higher? Despite taxes and failing policies, I love how the western states enforce patient safety due to safe nurse:patient ratios. However, if this bill is to pass, this will encourage me (and most likely other nurses) to look for work in another state, which does not help with the nursing shortage, which brings me to my other concern...

2) The increase in taxes will burden the already burdened healthcare system. Just in the past 5 years since Covid, I have seen a huge increase in acuity of our patients; patients are becoming more complex in illnesses, more immobile, more obese and it will only get worse when more nurses quit bedside nursing due to either work-related injuries (from carrying our increasingly immobile---huge increase in stroke patients---and increasingly obese population) and/or from mental burn-out (which nurses already are). Diet plays a huge role in preventing and managing chronic illnesses, including mental health issues. If people are not able to afford healthy food because their take home pay is smaller, how will this bill help anyone in the long run?? Many of our seniors rely on Medicaid/Medicare and social security. Our seniors can barely afford proper housing and food as is. If they can't afford to live on their own and they're not able to afford long term care facilities, then the burden relies on the family members--IF they are willing and IF they can afford it since there will be an increase in payroll taxes. If this bill is passed, I assure you they will not be able to do so. (How is it that we are such a wealthy country yet one of the sickest??). How do you expect children to enjoy their childhoods and live long if they become sick at an early age because of the processed foods, since their parents were unable to afford healthy food? Or unable to live off of one income so a parent can live off the land and take care of the children? Childcare expenses is the equivalent to monthly rent/mortgage. It's a vicious cycle and you can help by not passing this bill.

3) I am under the impression that increasing taxes on specific areas will force people

to stop driving and use the public transportation system. I used to live in the Portland Metro area---enough people already do not use the public transportation system because it's unsafe; unsafe due to criminals not being held accountable, unsafe due to mental health issues (drug related or not). How about making Oregonians' health and safety a priority!? Safe roads are important, I agree; however, there are other ways to go about this (BUDGET) than taxing residents of Oregon.

Failed funding and policies (housing, needles for drug users, illegal immigrant support, defunding police etc.) are ruining this beautiful state. How about budget like the rest of us have to and take money from your failed funding programs and incorporate that money to areas you want to improve. Remember, you work for the people of Oregon. We don't work for you. Just scrolling down the numerous of testimonies, I have seen majority of people OPPOSE this bill. I beg you to NOT pass this bill. Thank you for your time.