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It is my belief that in the 30 years of my nursing career the implementation of mandatory staffing for breaks and meal breaks provided the greatest benefit to the nursing profession since my nursing career starting in 1995. With the broad application of the 12 hr nursing working shift in recent years makes the current law critical to prevent burnout, maintain current safety levels. I have seen it work as it is. I work in at Unity hospital system that employs about 300 nurses. In the first 7 years of opening we were losing so many nurses monthly, it seemed that we would never reach stable staffing. Today, I would have to say that we have reached a stable work force for the last 3 to 4 months due to the passing of mandatory break coverage that is enforceable by fines. The reason why? Nurses feel they have a safe place to work and will get their breaks as required and needed.

Furthermore, only 16% of the working population in America works a 12 hr a day schedule. Allowing hospitals and administrators to recreate, then increasing staffing assignments and expectations would defeat the initial well established staffing maximums and the mandatory break coverage passed by the Oregon legislature. Hospitals and administrators have already increased staff by creating a non-standard 12 hr daily schedule verse the 8 hr daily schedule. This was after there was a consensus of maximum nursing assignments based on the 8 hr daily schedule. Hospital and administrators cannot claim it creating a financial burden if these administrators are receiving huge compensation packages and raises yearly. Please do not break that was fixed. Thousands of nurses are expecting your support.

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