



Testimony in Support of HB 3011
February 23, 2021
House Committee On HealthCare
Submission from Mary Romanaggi, RN

Greetings Chair Prusak, Vice-Chairs Salinas and Hayden, and members of the committee.

My name is Mary Romanaggi, and I member of Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). Today I submit, to you, testimony in support of HB 3011 as one of ONA's 15,000 registered nurses, Nurse Practitioners of Oregon, and professional member affiliates throughout the state. I am honored to be one of those Nurses and helping to represent our organization.

I support HB 3011. Our current COVID pandemic experience has illuminated an unforeseen flaw in the blanketed option for a health care facility to suspend the nurse staffing committee and its related staffing plans in times of emergency. The intention was good, and it got us through, but it needs to be refined so that the professional opinions of nurses are not completely disregarded once a better view of the problem can be achieved.

During the pandemic it became painfully clear that our nursing workforce needed to adopt less than optimal standards in order to assess, stabilize, and address the needs of our patients, colleagues, and employers. This short-term strategy, while necessary, revealed a lack of preparedness and left nurses, throughout the state, without an ability to inform contingency plans at time when nursing expertise was most desperately needed.

This statutory amendment would center the needs of our patients by maintaining the collaborative, solution-based framework of our hospital nurse staffing committees to address evolving conditions and maintain a cohesive work environment. It's a proactive approach to emergency preparedness that limits uncertainty and better prepares our health care system for future catastrophic events.

My personal experience as a nurse during this pandemic, I have seen hospitals initiate unnecessary crisis staffing, in our own Emergency Departments we experienced decreased in experienced staff. Often time plans ignored which meant we had to work in unsafe conditions. Some of which saw as few as 2 nurses and one CNA in an emergency room where we can see higher volumes of patients.

I support HB 3011, and we ask that you vote favorably to move the bill out of committee.