



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

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House Democrats Push to Give Oregon Nurses a Voice During Pandemic and Emergency Response

HB 3016 will require hospitals to prioritize nurse safety and staffing needs during national and state emergencies.

SALEM, OR—Today, the Oregon House voted to approve [HB 3016](#), a bill that would prioritize nurse safety and staffing needs during national and state emergencies. The bill passed 32-17 and now moves onto the Senate floor for consideration.

In order to better support nurses and patients, the bill establishes requirements for what hospitals must do if they need to deviate from established nurse staffing ratios during an emergency. HB 3016 will require hospitals to develop contingency staffing plans, crisis care standards, and ensure hospital nurse staffing committees are given a seat at the table when making these key decisions.

“Nurses are the backbone of the healthcare industry and work endless hours, even risking their lives to care for Oregonians most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic,” said bill sponsor, [Rep. Rob Nosse \(D-Portland\)](#). “HB 3016 ensures that nurses will have a voice on staffing during a disaster or a pandemic so they can advocate for the quality care patients deserve.”

The bill comes in response to this past year’s COVID-19 pandemic where nurses and other healthcare workers faced an influx of patients, leading to a staff shortages and caregivers working overtime.

“This legislation is crucial to the wellbeing of both our healthcare workers and patients,” said [Rep. Rachel Prusak \(D-Tualatin / West Linn\)](#). “I’ve been on the frontlines of healthcare during this pandemic and when I say this is a matter of ‘life or death,’ I’m not exaggerating. Nurses bear the majority of patient care making our voices indispensable when it comes to planning staffing needs and safety requirements.”

This policy will center the needs of patients by maintaining the collaborative solutions-based process of staffing committees to address evolving conditions and maintain a cohesive work environment.

In 2015 SB 469 passed, requiring every Oregon hospital to establish a hospital nurse staffing committee to develop a written hospital-wide staffing plan to ensure that the hospital is staffed to meet the health

care needs of patient. In addition, the bill established the 12-member Nurse Staffing Advisory Board charged with advising the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) regarding administration and enforcement of staffing plans. HB 3016 modifies this requirement for hospital nurse staffing plans during a national or state emergency declaration.

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