

## Oregon House Bills 3016 and 3011: Ensuring safe hospital staffing in an emergency and beyond

Hospital staffing shortages are unsafe for patients and nurses. They result in increased infections and injuries in patients and leads to nurse burnout and stress from working longer hours without breaks or lunches. Staffing plans were stretched to the limit during COVID-19 when so many Oregon hospitals were near capacity--with an unprecedented number of patients in the ICU. We can't let this happen again. Next time we must be ready.

### House Bill 3016

Oregon must take the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic and quickly apply them to prepare for the next extended emergency. HB 3016 addresses one important gap in how Oregon responded to COVID-19: ensuring safe nurse staffing levels during a crisis.

HB 3016 updates current law to maintain nurse-informed safe staffing levels during extended public health emergencies by:

- Reconvening staffing committees within 30 days so nurses and administrators can quickly come together in an emergency to write collaborative and flexible staffing plans informed by real-time data and on-the-ground experiences of frontline caregivers' voices.
- Requiring approval within 90 days by the joint nurse-administration staffing committees of deviations from pre-emergency staffing plans.
- Ensuring both state and federal emergency declarations trigger informed safe staffing procedures.

### House Bill 3011

Safe nurse staffing saves lives, saves money and helps patients get healthy and home quickly. Safe nurse staffing is one of the most effective, affordable ways to improve patients' health care. Oregon's hospital nurse staffing law is a model for the nation, designed to ensure safe staffing levels through a collaborative process of nurses and administrators in our state's hospitals. Each hospital's unique safe staffing plans are enforced by the Oregon Health Authority.

Unfortunately, OHA does not have the staffing or ability to meaningfully review staffing plans or ensure compliance with the law, which is why in 2020 funding for staffing law enforcement had bipartisan support from the legislature but wasn't able to move forward before that unique session ended.

HB 3011 provides \$1.4 million in funding to the Oregon Health Authority to enforce Oregon's hospital nurse staffing law to ensure that:

- Hospitals are following their existing, collaboratively agreed-upon nurse staffing plans
- Every hospital or system required to have a safe staffing plan has one
- When unsafe staffing reports are filed, there is OHA staff to follow up so patients aren't left in dangerous conditions

**To contact ONA's Legislative Team visit [www.OregonRN.org/GR](http://www.OregonRN.org/GR)**