Resolution to improve nurse staffing in Oregon

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Whereas, the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) acknowledges that nursing is in a staffing crisis and,

Whereas, the current staffing crisis is the result of a decades long strategy by healthcare systems to underfund nursing and,

Whereas, the effects of the COVID pandemic exacerbated issues of nurse staffing shortages and,

Whereas, nurses are currently leaving the profession at unprecedented rates and,

Whereas, it is well documented that inadequate nurse staffing leads to moral distress among nurses and,

Whereas, 22 years after ONA first passed a nurse staffing law staffing is at its worst and,

Whereas, ONA recognizes that hospitals have willfully evaded adherence to Oregon’s nurse staffing law and,

Whereas, ONA acknowledges that the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has not lived up to its responsibility to regulate the law and,

Whereas, ONA has reviewed the Nurse Staffing Advisory Board minutes to reveal that ONA members have advised the OHA of continued and worsening compliance, by hospitals, to the staffing law and,

Whereas, ONA members have also advised the OHA that nurses are experiencing increasing fatigue and "burnout" due to inadequate staffing and,

Whereas, nursing shortages impact patient care in severe and adverse ways and,

Whereas, ONA’s Strategic Vision and Mission includes advocating for patients.

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, that ONA will commit to re-evaluating the current approach to nurse staffing and, be it further,

Resolved, that ONA will begin to explore a nurse: patient ratio model as a minimum staffing standard and allows for enhancement of this model that account for acuity and/or intensity that will empower our members and protect our patients and be it further,

Resolved, that ONA will evaluate ways to ensure better enforcement of nurse staffing law(s) and be it further,
Resolved, that ONA will use its legislative power to advocate for better staffing and better pay for nurses and be it further,

Resolved, that ONA will explore legislation and public policy to increase funding sources for loan forgiveness for all nurses caring for underserved and rural populations and be it further,

Resolved, that ONA will continue to find ways to support the mental health of nurses including programs like the Oregon Wellness Program and be it further,

Resolved, that ONA will support legislation and rules that allow nurses at all practice levels to practice at the top of their scope and license.