Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) and the State of Oregon (State) are close to reaching a tentative agreement. But because of scheduling conflicts, rather than meet face-to-face, the State provided a package proposal to ONA on July 30, 2013 by email. ONA responded by email on August 2, 2013. The following is a summary of where we have reached agreement and what issues remain outstanding.

**Article 51**
On June 28, the State proposed increasing the accrual of vacation to 350 hours, so long as ONA agreed to limit the amount someone could cash-out of vacation to 250 hours and compensatory time to 120 hours. ONA indicated on August 2 that we could accept this compromise.

**Article 18 – Salary**
The State proposed and ONA accepted a 1.5 percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase effective December 1, 2013 and a 2.0 percent COLA increase effective December 1, 2014. But ONA has also proposed a step increase for nurses currently at Step 9 (the top step).

**Article 20 – Public Employees Retirement System (PERS)**
Last time we met, the State indicated a desire to move away from the employer 6 percent pick-up for PERS. It’s backed off that proposal and is back to current language in the agreement. ONA indicated a willingness to accept the current language.

**Article 54 – Health Insurance**
The language would be amended to read:

Plan years 2013–2015. For the period from January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2015, the State will pay 95% and employees will pay 5% of the monthly premium rate for health, dental, vision and basic life insurance as determined by PEBB.

Exception for Plan Year 2015. When a full time employee enrolls in the least expensive
PEBB health plan available to the employee, the Employer shall pay 97% of the monthly premium for health, dental vision and basic life insurance as determined by PEBB and the employee shall pay the remaining 3%. This section of the article shall become operational only when 95% of employees statewide have at least 2 plan options.

For every 1.6% that the 2015 PEBB projected composite rate is below the projected 5% increase for Plan Year 2015, the 2% across the board pay increase will be paid 1 month earlier than December 1, 2014 increase.

**Article 68 – Term of Agreement**
July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

**Appendix B, Letter of Agreement Part-Time Employees Insurance Benefits**
For Plan year 2013, the State will pay 95 percent of the part-time subsidy as determined by Public Employees Benefit Board (PEBB), for eligible employees who participate in the part-time plan and employees shall pay the remaining 5 percent.

Effective Plan years 2014 and 2015, the employer will pay a part-time subsidy up to the following amounts, based on the employee’s coverage tier:

- Employee only $346.25
- Employee and partner $452.34
- Employee and children $395.94
- Employee and family $460.52

If an employee changes from one tier to another or changes plans under PEBB rules, the employee’s out-of-pocket premium costs will be adjusted to reflect the appropriate plan year’s out-of-pocket premium costs for the employee’s new tier.

**Appendixes C, D, and E, Letters of Agreement to address the closure of Blue Mountain Recovery Center (BMRC)**
We learned late in negotiations that the State Legislature had decided to close BMRC effective December 31, 2013. BMRC’s closure has been threatened in each of the last two negotiations (2009 and 2011) so to some extent this decision was not surprising. However, once the final decision was made, it was necessary to secure language to help the BMRC nurses transition to new employment.

Appendix C would be a letter of agreement that would have the State continue to pay the employee portion of a BMRC nurse’s insurance premium for six months, so long as the BMRC nurse does not file or receive unemployment insurance benefits. There are other restrictions. ONA is in agreement with this proposal.

Appendix D would provide BMRC nurses interview leave time greater than what is currently provided in Appendix A. Nurses would have up to eight hours of interview leave. Under this agreement, the employer would not incur travel expenses. Nor would the employer incur overtime costs or accrual of compensatory time.

Appendix E is a proposal ONA made that the State has not agreed to that would enable nurses to get paid time off to take Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS); Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS); and Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC). Tuition and other expenses would be provided subject to availability of funds.

**Next Steps**
We are waiting to hear back from the State and hope to be able to send you a contract soon to be ratified.