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ONA Labor Relations Representative

Courtney Niebel, B.A.
503-560-4668
niebel@OregonRN.org

Oregon Nurses Association

18765 SW Boones Ferry Road
Suite 200, Tualatin OR 97062
1-800-634-3552 within Oregon
www.OregonRN.org



Nurses Week Event

Despite the fact that we have been unable to secure rooms at St. Charles Medical Center - Bend (STC-B) for a Nurses Week event as we had envisioned, your Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) nurse leaders will be making rounds throughout next week to thank you for all the amazing work that you do.

The American Nurses Association (ANA) dubbed 2017 the "Year of the Healthy Nurse," and we believe achieving a "Balance of Mind, Body, and Spirit" in the workplace begins with our ability to take restorative breaks away from the stress of patient care. It is not enough for our breaks to be provided by another caregiver who is then responsible for more patients than the staffing plan calls for. It is also not restorative to be relieved by a "buddy" to take our breaks because we remain essentially on-call to respond to any urgent or emergent issues. During Nurses Week, we will be distributing stickers with the message "Provide Nurses a Break" to ask St. Charles administration to do more to provide the restorative breaks we need.

In January 2016, the Washington State Nurses Association received a groundbreaking arbitration decision confirming that

"The requirement of a nurse on break to be 'on call' diminishes the purpose of a break from work. Nursing requires knowledge, experience, dedication and

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AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION

Nursing: The Balance of Mind, Body, and Spirit

concentration, tempered with compassion and patience, to successfully care for patients in need. The related stress, both physically and mentally, warrant occasional time away from their assigned task. The nurse on break should be free from worry and concern, with the knowledge that the nurse's colleague is providing the necessary attention to the assigned patients. If that nurse has her/his own patients, doubling the potential workload, even for 15 minutes, the time away from work is not really a break."

—Arbitration decision

Source: Washington State Nurses Association. *WSNA wins groundbreaking arbitration enforcing rest breaks for nurses*. Press Release. January 16, 2016. <https://www.wsna.org/nursing-update/2016/wsna-wins-groundbreaking-arbitration-enforcing-rest-breaks-for-nurses>. Accessed May 2, 2017.

We agree wholeheartedly with this decision, which is why we are focusing on meals and breaks this Nurses Week. We have already elevated a grievance regarding meals and breaks to arbitration and are waiting for the hearing to be scheduled. We will be seeking clarification from the Oregon Health Authority regarding whether the "buddy system" constitutes a violation of the Oregon Hospital Nurse Staffing Law, as we believe it does. We continue to work with St. Charles

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Nurses Week Events (continued from page 1)

administration to encourage implementation of a data collection system that will allow us all to better analyze exactly how many breaks are being provided or missed and why, so that we can work to address those barriers in a meaningful way.

To encourage you to take time for yourself and embrace the “Year of the Healthy Nurse,” we will be raffling off a gift basket with a \$100 gift card for Starbucks, two ONA “Take a Break” coffee mugs and assorted coffees, teas and snacks at the

end of Nurses Week. To enter in the raffle, submit a story about the worst break you ever had at St. Charles and post it on our Work News Facebook page—tag Courtney Niebel in the post to be sure we see it. **Please do not include any patient identifying information in your story!** Not on Facebook? You can still enter the raffle by submitting a story via email to Courtney Niebel, ONA labor representative, at Niebel@OregonRN.org. The deadline for submission is midnight on Friday, May 12.

Bend Representative Knute Buehler, MD, votes “NO” to help patients’ drug costs!



Oregon Representative
Knute Buehler, District 54
(R - Bend)

This week at the Oregon Legislature, House Bill (HB) 2387, legislation aimed at keeping prescription drug costs affordable, passed the Oregon House Committee on Health Care, despite our own Bend representative, Knute Buehler, voting “NO” on the measure. As you know, Buehler is an orthopedic physician at The Center and a member of the St. Charles Health System board of directors. His vote against this

bill is stunning and very disappointing.

The main tenets of this bill include:

- It caps out-of-pocket expenses for consumers at either \$100 or \$250 per prescription, depending on whether they have gold/silver or bronze prescription drug coverage.
- It requires drug companies to disclose profits as well as spending on operating costs, research and

development, and advertising, to provide transparency for consumers regarding the costs and prices of drugs. .

- It creates a new “premium protection program” to make sure drug rebates help consumers rather than insurance companies.

Source: NewsChannel 21. *Oregon bill to curb prescription drug prices moves forward*. Text article. April 18, 2017. <http://www.ktvz.com/news/oregon-bill-to-curb-drug-prices-moves-forward/454456952>. Accessed May 2, 2017.

As nurses, we are responsible for educating our patients on all aspects of their health, including the many prescriptions their physicians instruct them to take. How often do we hear patients say “How much will this cost?” or “I can’t afford those medications” or “That medication has doubled in price”? The harsh reality is that we have patients in our community who can’t afford the medications that physicians like Representative Buehler prescribe for them, while the pharmaceutical industry continues to reap huge profits annually.

As nurses we ask that our local elected officials advocate for our community and our patients, putting them first and not the billion-dollar pharmaceutical industry. **Patients before profits:** it’s not just a slogan—we mean it!

Oregon Nurse Staffing Law Information Sessions

Join ONA’s nursing practice consultant Jordan Ferris, RN, BSN, CMSRN, for a brief presentation and Q&A regarding the recent additions to the Oregon Nurse Staffing Law. We all need to know our rights regarding this law. Come for the presentation for basic knowledge or drop in for the Q&A to have your specific questions answered.

Staffing Law Information Sessions

Friday, May 19

7:30-9:30 a.m.

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

3:30-5:30 p.m.

Ortho/Neuro conference room, 3rd floor

Oregon State Legislative Update

In other legislative news of importance to ONA and our nurse members, here is a summary of Oregon House Bills (HBs) and Senate Bills (SBs) supported by nurses and ONA, some of which were partially written by nurses within ONA. We also share whether our three local legislators (Representative Knute Buehler, Representative Gene Whisnant and Senator Tim Knopp) support or oppose the legislation.

- **SB 1040 (union protections)** was approved by the Senate Committee on Workforce.
 - ⊗ *Senator Tim Knopp voted NO.*
- **HB 2387 (affordable prescription drug costs)** was approved by the House Committee on Health Care.
 - ⊗ *Representative Knute Buehler voted NO.*
- **HB 2645 (prescription drug take-back)** was approved by the House Committee on Health Care.
 - ⊗ *Representative Knute Buehler voted NO.*
- **HB 2019 (greater corporate transparency)**
 - ⊗ *Representative Buehler is a vocal critic of corporate transparency and fair taxation efforts.*
- **HB 2005 (relating to pay equity)** recently passed the Oregon House of Representatives.
 - ⊗ *Representatives Buehler and Whisnant voted NO.*
- **HB 2103 (nurse practitioner vasectomy authority)** was a bipartisan bill that just passed the Oregon House of Representatives.
 - ⊗ *Representatives Buehler and Whisnant both voted NO.*
- **HB 2726 and SB 558 (Cover All Kids)** has now passed both the House and Senate Committees on Health Care.
 - ⊗ *Representatives Buehler and Whisnant and Senator Knopp voted NO.*
- **HB 2339 (surprise billing patient protection)**
 - ⊗ *Representatives Buehler and Whisnant both voted NO.*
- **HB 3391 (reproductive health equity)** was approved by the House Committee on Health Care.
 - ⊗ *Representative Knute Buehler voted NO.*

Negotiations at St. Charles - Prineville

The nurses at St. Charles Prineville are in negotiations. Their top priority is achieving comparable wages to Bend and Redmond as they continue to see nurses trained at Prineville move to positions in those larger cities as soon as they have the experience to qualify. For the nurses at Prineville, this creates significant turnover, increased orientation/preceptor responsibilities and a general feeling of not being appreciated. Though nurses in Prineville may not see the level of acuity that we do here at Bend, they are responsible for having the breadth of knowledge to respond to a wide range of ailments in their patients, and they do not have the same level of specialty support in areas such as IV therapy,

wound care, respiratory therapy, rapid response, etc. Of course, the nurses there are required to have the same level of education that we do, maintain the same certifications, etc. The work may be different but is in no way less worthy, and these nurses should be treated equally within the St. Charles system. In the upcoming weeks, we may be seeking support for nurses at Prineville in various ways.

St. Charles nurses stick together! Stay tuned for updates on negotiations at Prineville and a potential request for support.

St. Charles Nurses Stick Together!

Charge Nurse Grievance Update

We currently have three grievances being processed at various steps regarding the potential erosion of charge nurse positions throughout the Bend hospital. Given that St. Charles administration proposed removal of charge nurses from the bargaining unit during negotiations in 2012, it is difficult to believe that the changes we are seeing now are unintentional, though administration continues to insist that they are. The three issues being addressed through the grievances are:

- Positioned charge nurses, regardless of full- or part-time status, should be paid the charge nurse differential for “all hours compensated” but are only receiving it for hours worked in the role.
- Vacated charge nurse positions are not being reposted but instead filled by relief charge nurses despite the contractual requirement that the number of charge nurses be determined by the Bend staffing committee (BSC). The BSC has never reviewed a request to change the number of charge nurses on a unit since the language requiring them to do so was

implemented in 2012.

- The charge nurse position is degraded when positioned charge nurses are treated like relief charge nurses. There is a clear distinction in the ONA/St. Charles Hospital System (SCHS) labor agreement: relief charge is an assignment while charge nurses hold a position. This is not a minor distinction. St. Charles administration essentially controls assignments, including who they are awarded to, but a position is awarded in accordance with the terms of the contract and cannot be taken away except through a disciplinary process and for just cause.

We will not allow St. Charles administration to undermine the charge nurse position that we fought hard to preserve in our Bend bargaining unit in 2012. If you have seen any changes in the charge nurse role on your unit over the past five years, please let us know! Email ONA labor representative Courtney Niebel at Niebel@OregonRN.org.

Tell Legislators What's at Stake without Revenue Reform

Join ONA in Salem on June 6 for a Revenue Reform Lobby Day to tell legislators what's at stake!

This week, the Oregon State Legislature finally put forward a robust revenue reform proposal to fund education and services. The plan outlined pays particular attention to funding K-12 and higher education and increasing school health by investing in nutrition and school nurses. Without continued revenue reform conversations, 350,000 low-income Oregonians could lose access to health care and vital nurse-led public health programs could be cut.

As the legislature continues to consider revenue proposals on our education, health care and services funding gaps, it's vital that we keep up the momentum to make sure legislators know what's at



stake for our patients and communities. Join us for a revenue reform rally and lobby day with advocates and partners across the state on Tuesday, June 6, at 11 a.m. at the Oregon State Capitol in Salem. We will talk to key legislators and make sure we send a clear message to lawmakers that cuts and simply maintaining the status quo is unacceptable.

To RSVP for the Revenue Reform Lobby Day, contact Chris Hewitt at Hewitt@OregonRN.org.