



Monday, March 31, 2025

Good morning co-chairs and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is David Lynch and I am Mental Health Registered Nurse at the Oregon State Hospital where we provide treatment focused on hope, safety and recovery. I have been working at the Oregon State Hospital for 13 years and a half years. And have been the union president for the RN's and Nurse practitioners for the past 8.

The Oregon State Hospital provides clinical and patient wrap-around services for individuals who require psychiatric evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment, as well as community outreach and peer support.

The work we perform at OSH is unique and comes with its own challenges. We care about our patients and want to be present for them in every way. There are countless stories about workers being severely injured while on the job by patients experiencing a mental health crisis.

I'm one of them. April will mark 4 years since my traumatic brain injury. 6 months of constant medical appointments. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, neurologists, neuro optometrists, MRI's. Explaining why dada has to wear sunglasses inside and isn't safe to be left alone with you anymore.



Yet, many of us return to OSH and show up for the patients. Many OSH employees intentionally come back to work after sustaining injuries because to them it's not just a job, it's a passion rooted in helping those who have been forgotten and underserved by most of society.

As president of my local it's long overdue to have the same PTSI presumption as the department of corrections. Both environments offer incredibly stressful working conditions. However, a major draw for our members who transfer to corrections is they know that the injury rates are much much lower.

Including us who work at the State Hospital and SACU is a sign of validation and recognition for those who show up everyday for those with the most needs. The current workers compensation process is not working, it makes us feel invalidated.

It's undeniable that workers are sustaining mental health injuries and anyone who steps inside the State Hospital can quickly see the high levels of stress and anxiety we live with everyday and take home to our families. We cannot and should not look away from the clear data that shows the high level of physical trauma and the inevitable mental health effects these injuries have.



Thank you for your consideration and I hope you can support the workers who care for the most acute and vulnerable individuals in the state of Oregon.