

# Nurse and Health Care Worker Protection Act

## H.R. 4266/S.2408

The American Nurses Association (ANA) urges you to cosponsor **H.R. 4266/S.2408**, the Nurse and Health Care Worker Protection Act. Introduced on December 16, 2015 by Representative John Conyers (D-MI) and Senator Al Franken (D-MN), this legislation is the only national legislation that improves the quality of patient care and protects nurses by addressing safe patient handling and mobility (SPHM). SPHM programs eliminate the manual lifting, moving and repositioning of patients by nurses and health care workers.

Every day, nurses and other health care workers suffer debilitating pain and often career-ending musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), due to manually lifting patients --- an estimated **3,600 pounds per shift**.

**Nurses rank sixth among all occupations for highest incidence rates of MSD injuries resulting in days away from work.** The implementation of SPHM programs can drastically reduce injuries and protect nurses. Nurses and health care workers experience the highest rate of non-fatal occupational injuries and illnesses of any sectors, including manufacturing and construction.

### The Nurse and Health Care Worker Protection Act:

- Requires OSHA to develop and implement a SPHM standard that will eliminate manual lifting of patients by nurses within two years of the legislation's enactment.
- Requires employers to purchase, use, and maintain equipment within two years after the establishment of the standard. It also requires employers to train health care workers annually on proper usage of equipment.
- SPHM programs provide early mobility therapy which gets patients up and moving, as soon and as often as possible, leading to decreased mortality, length of stay in hospitals and unplanned readmissions.

The American Nurses Association (ANA) urges you to stand with nurses and cosponsor **H.R. 4266/S.2408**, the Nurse and Health Care Worker Protection Act today.

### FACTS AT A

## GLANCE

### Nurse and Health Care Worker Protection Act

#### KEEPS PATIENTS SAFE

SPHM programs protect patients and improve the quality of patient care. Patients experience fewer falls, friction burns, dislocated shoulders, skin tears, and bruises. Patients also report an enhanced sense of dignity and satisfaction through the use of SPHM technology such as overhead lifts.

#### KEEPS NURSES SAFE

In 2014, 11,360 RNs suffered injuries while assisting patients and performing their jobs. These injuries are preventable through comprehensive safe patient handling and mobility programs. In fact, successful programs have reduced the incidence of injury by up to 95 percent.

#### CUTS COSTS

This legislation improves the safety of patient care delivery, while decreasing the potential for injury to nurses and reducing health care costs.

Hospitals with successful SPHM programs offer a cost-effective alternative to eventual nurse turnover due to injury, potentially saving between \$27,000 and \$103,000 per nurse.