

March 28, 2025

The Honorable Lori Chavez-DeRemer
Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Chavez-DeRemer,

The American Nurses Association (ANA) looks forward to working with you to address the nation's most pressing labor issues, as you assume your role as Secretary of the Department of Labor (DOL) and lead the agency to identify and implement policies aimed at growing and supporting our nation's workforce and safety. ANA and its members stand ready to serve as a resource and a partner with DOL and its subagencies, for advancing policies that focus on safe work environments and the development of the nursing profession through:

1. Continued worker protections and accountability for business to support workers safety,
2. The appointment of a permanent director to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA),
3. Continued timely publication and transparency of workplace violence statistics, and
4. Publication of rulemaking to institute a standard for workplace violence prevention.

ANA is the premier organization representing the interests of the nation's over 5 million registered nurses (RNs), through its state and constituent member associations, organizational affiliates, and individual members. ANA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting a safe and ethical work environment, bolstering the health and wellness of nurses, and advocating on health care issues that affect nurses and the public.

Nurses and other health care professionals are at high risk of workplace violence.¹ Our most recent surveys, such as the June 2022 ANA survey, found that 29% of nurses had experienced a violent incident in the last year.² Furthermore, the November 2022 ANA survey revealed that 53% of nurses reported an increase in verbal abuse since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.³ A 2020 study from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) revealed that healthcare and social service workers accounted for 76% of incidents involving workplace violence that

¹ Rozina Somani, et al., A Systematic Review: Effectiveness of Interventions to De-escalate Workplace Violence against Nurses in Healthcare Settings, Safety and Health at Work, May 3, 2021, available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34527388/>.

² American Nurses Foundation, Pulse on the Nation's Nurses Survey Series: 2022 Workplace Survey, August 2, 2022, available at: [American Nurses Foundation 2022 Workplace Survey | ANA](https://www.nurses.org/2022-workplace-survey)

³ American Nurses Foundation, Three-year Annual Assessment Survey: Nurses Need Increased Support from their Employer, January 24, 2023, available at: [anf-impact-assessment-third-year_v5.pdf](https://www.nurses.org/2023-annual-assessment)

required time away from work—a statistic that is likely underreported due to the pervasive culture of silence surrounding such incidents.⁴

Despite the severity of this crisis, the absence of national prevention standards leaves states to address the issue individually. However, a fragmented approach is insufficient to address the scope of the problem. We strongly believe that a unified, federal standard for workplace violence prevention in health care settings is essential to safeguard health care workers across the country. The DOL, through OSHA, has a critical responsibility to mitigate workplace violence and its harmful consequences. A mandatory OSHA standard that requires national reporting of workplace violence incidents is a vital first step toward preventing future occurrences. ANA has been supportive of OSHA's efforts to initiate rulemaking for a workplace violence standard which remains on the unified agenda, and we commend the completion of the Small Business Advocacy Review (SBAR) in May 2023. However, it has now been two years since OSHA began this important rulemaking process. We respectfully urge the DOL to finalize this standard and issue a proposed rule for public comment without further delay.

In addition to the establishment of a federal standard, we also urge the DOL to prioritize the timely and continued publication of data capturing workplace injuries, particularly within the health care sector. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has not analyzed or published healthcare-specific data on workplace violence since 2018.⁵ Without accurate, up-to-date data, health care employers and systems are unable to develop effective, evidence-based prevention strategies.

While workplace violence is a concern across various industries, the health care and social assistance sectors face unique risks due to the nature of the relationship between health care providers, patients, and their visitors. Events like the most recent shooting of a nurse and killing of a police officer in a Pennsylvania Hospital⁶ continue to raise concerns about the safety of hospital personnel and other patients. Nurses, at the forefront of patient care, are exposed to these risks daily, placing their physical and mental health at significant risk. As such, a comprehensive national approach to preventing workplace violence is not just necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of health care workers—it is vital.

We call upon the DOL to continue its proactive engagement with stakeholders, including health care workers, employers, and regulatory bodies, to ensure clear communication and sustained commitment to workplace safety. This engagement will be critical as we work together to establish effective safety strategies that will protect the essential workforce on which our health care system relies.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing issue. We remain committed to working alongside you and your team to ensure that every health care worker in the United States is safe. We look forward to your timely response and the continued progress on this critical matter.

⁴ The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Occupational Violence: Fast Facts, last reviewed August 31, 2022, available at: [About Workplace Violence | Violence | CDC](#)

⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Workplace Violence in Healthcare, 2018, Released April 2020, available at: [Workplace Violence in Healthcare, 2018 : U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

⁶ Shooting incident confirmed at a Pennsylvania hospital
Elassar & Galgan, [Police officer killed, 5 other people wounded after gunman holds Pennsylvania hospital staff hostage, officials say | CNN](#)

Please contact Tim Nanof, ANA's Executive Vice President for Policy and Government Affairs, at Tim.Nanof@ana.org with any questions. Additionally, we would like to take this opportunity to request a meeting with you and your staff regarding the above matters. We stand ready to provide expertise and resources on these and other labor issues and look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Mensik Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN
President

cc: Angela Beddoe, ANA Chief Executive Officer