

Protect Nurses from Preventable Workplace Violence

Our country is facing a nursing workforce crisis, driven by and further impacting the environments in which nurses work, and resulting in burnout and attrition. **One of the most troubling factors leading to nurse burnout is the increasing incidences of workplace violence.** In fact, 75% of the nearly 25,000 workplace assaults reported annually occurred in health care and social services settings. Workplace violence costs the U.S. \$151 billion per year, with an average of \$250,000 per incident. These figures do not capture hidden costs of workplace violence-related incidents, such as their adverse impact on the mental health of health care practitioners and their patients.

Nurses should not have to fear becoming victims of violence while going to work to care for their patients. They deserve to work in an environment that prioritizes their physical and psychological safety. Congress must act to ensure health care and social service employers take common sense steps to protect their employees and the patients who walk into their facilities.

The ***Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act (H.R. 2531 / S.1232)*** would

require the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to issue standards requiring health care and social service employers to write and implement a workplace violence prevention plan to prevent and protect their employees from violence. It would ensure that nurses and other direct-care employees are part of the development and execution of workplace violence prevention plans, with the flexibility to tailor the plan to specific units and patient populations, as well as specific environmental and population hazards. This allows nurses to do one of the things they do best: speaking up for safety. The bill also includes anti-retaliation protections that would allow nurses to report workplace violence without fear of reprisal.

The *Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act* is a tangible change towards keeping our nurses safe and protected in their place of work. **Co-sponsor H.R. 2531 / S. 1232 today.**

Original Sponsors/Cosponsors:

House - Reps. Joe Courtney (CT), Don Bacon (NE), Bobby Scott (VA), Brian Fitzpatrick (PA), Ilhan Omar (MN), and Alma Adams (NC).

Senate - Sens. Tammy Baldwin (WI), Ed Markey (MA), Tim Kaine (VA), Jeanne Shaheen (NH), Ben Ray Lujan (NM), Amy Klobuchar (MN), Alex Padilla (CA), Tina Smith (MN), Richard Blumenthal (CT), Patty Murray (WA), Bernie Sanders (VT), Elissa Slotkin (MI), Elizabeth Warren (MA), Catherine Cortez Masto (NV), Jeff Merkley (OR), Jack Reed (RI), John Hickenlooper (CO), Tammy Duckworth (IL), Chris Coons (DE), Chris Van Hollen (MD), and Martin Heinrich (NM).

Facts at a Glance

- This bill has **passed the House twice** with bipartisan support.
- **1 in 4** nurses report being assaulted, that is more than **1 million** nurses.
- Nurses are **more likely** to be exposed to workplace violence than police officers or prison guards.
- **Less than 60%** of incidents are reported.
- Workplace violence is considered a **sentinel event** by the Joint Commission.
- Workplace violence costs the U.S. **\$151 billion per year**, with an average of **\$250,000 per incident**.

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