

TO: The Honorable Delores Kelley, Chair  
Finance Committee

FROM: Nancy Praglowski, MS, RN-BC  
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Johns Hopkins supports **SB 700 – Maryland Department of Health – Prevent Workplace Violence in Health Care Settings Public Awareness Campaign Workgroup**. This bill would require the Maryland Department of Health to convene a workgroup to develop a public awareness campaign to prevent workplace violence in health care settings. The campaign would provide the public with information on the magnitude of the incidence of workplace violence in health care settings in Maryland and the consequences of the workplace violence in health care settings. The campaign will also address the need for the public to respect and protect Maryland’s health care providers from workplace violence and the need to recognize and accommodate the needs of patients with mental health, substance abuse, and disabilities. The workgroup will create a plan for implementing this campaign.

Johns Hopkins continues to experience workforce challenges. The pandemic has significantly strained and overwhelmed our health care system and our health care providers. Our health care workers continue to face the threat of workplace violence (“WPV”) as they strive to deliver compassionate care to our patients. For example, since 2020, we have seen an increase of 28.48% in workplace violence events and 7.19% of employee injuries. The need for this legislation is greater now than ever before.

As the largest private employer in the State, Johns Hopkins takes the responsibility to create a safe work environment for its employees very seriously. One of the ways an employer can create a safe work environment is to reduce an employee’s exposure to a threat. For example, we are currently using two items to offer situational awareness to clinical and non-clinical staff regarding aggressive patients. We also formed a WPV Steering Committee. This committee will work on crisis prevention education/training for all staff, monitoring WPV trends, post-event response and staff support, risk assessments, and policy review, among other items. We are also updating our visitor management systems to reduce risk of violence from visitors. Johns Hopkins remains committed to creating a safe work environment for its patients and staff.

For these reasons, Johns Hopkins recommends a **favorable report on SB 700– Maryland Department of Health – Prevent Workplace Violence in Health Care Settings Public Awareness Campaign Workgroup**.