



SB 1020: Safe Staffing Act of 2024

Before the Senate Finance Committee

March 14th

Position: **FAV**

Dear Chair Beidle and members of the committee:

My name is Lucy Caulker Nelson, and I am a resident of Maryland's 4th congressional district. I have been a healthcare worker for over two decades, and I am submitting this testimony to express my support for SB 1020, also known as the Safe Staffing Act of 2024. I want to express my gratitude to all the sponsors of this bill for recognizing the hard work and dedication of healthcare workers in our state.

The past few years have been incredibly challenging for healthcare workers in Maryland, both mentally and physically, due to chronic understaffing. This has had a severe impact on the quality of care we are able to provide to our patients. Adequate nursing and support staff are essential for any healthcare organization, and unfortunately, we have been facing a shortage. Nurses and technicians are forced to take on heavy patient loads, making it difficult to meet the basic needs of sick patients. Patients are experiencing longer wait times for treatment and assistance with daily care. This situation is alarming because it compromises patient safety.

Hospitals with understaffed environmental and nutrition staff are not able to provide a clean and healing environment for patients. Additionally, the burnout among nursing staff has led to many leaving the field. When patients do not receive the necessary care, they are more likely to be readmitted to the hospital. This bill is crucial in ensuring patient safety and addressing the issue of healthcare worker burnout.

The people of Maryland deserve quality healthcare services, and this can only be achieved by providing adequate staffing that is not overwhelmed by heavy workloads. As healthcare workers, we show up every day to take care of our patients, and all we ask is for the necessary resources to do our job safely.

I urge you all to consider the impact of this bill on yourself, your family, and your neighbors as you vote. We all want the best care for ourselves and our loved ones when we are sick, and that can only be possible with sufficient staffing that is not exhausted from taking on multiple responsibilities.

Thank you all for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lucy Caulker Nelson