



Building a Just Society

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**HB624: Hospitals - Clinical Staffing Committees and Plans - Establishment**  
**(Safe Staffing Act of 2026)**

**House Health Committee, February 18, 2026**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a not-for-profit civil rights and anti-poverty legal services organization that seeks to advance social justice, economic and racial equity, and fundamental human rights in Maryland. Our Workplace Justice Project works to expand and enforce the right of low-wage workers to receive an honest day's pay for an honest day's work. **The PJC supports HB624, which would establish safe staffing committees for Maryland's hospitals.**

Maryland has the longest Emergency Department (ED) wait times of any state in the country.<sup>1</sup> As the Maryland Health Services Commission identified, understaffing is one of the key factors that increases our ED stay lengths.<sup>2</sup> Staffing turnover is caused by working conditions and workload/staffing ratios.<sup>3</sup> Unless we act, Maryland's staffing shortages will continue to worsen.<sup>4</sup>

It is vital that we give workers opportunities to provide input on staffing ratios and other staffing concerns. Without input from frontline staff, Maryland will continue to see understaffing in our hospitals, and Maryland patients will continue to suffer the consequences. When one additional patient is added to the average nurse workload, odds of death increase for all patients, and odds of death are particularly elevated for Black patients.<sup>5</sup> Maryland patients deserve equitable and sufficient nursing care, and hospital workers deserve sustainable working conditions.

For these reasons, the PJC **SUPPORTS HB624** and urges a **FAVORABLE** report. Should you have any questions, please call Sam Williamson at 410-625-9409 ext. 234.

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<sup>1</sup> Health Management Associates, *Maryland General Assembly Hospital Throughput Work Group Final Report* (Mar. 2024), p.7, <https://mhaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/maryland-general-assembly-hospital-throughput-work-group-final-report-march-2024.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Briefing on AHEAD Model Implementation and Emergency Department Wait Times, Senate Finance Committee (Jan. 21, 2025), P.20, [https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/meeting\\_material/2025/fin%20-%20133819452036704332%20-%20Briefing%20Materials%20-%20AHEAD-EDWaitTimes%2001-21-25.pdf](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/meeting_material/2025/fin%20-%20133819452036704332%20-%20Briefing%20Materials%20-%20AHEAD-EDWaitTimes%2001-21-25.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> NSI Nursing Solutions, Inc., *2024 NSI National Health Care Retention & RN Staffing Report* (Mar. 2024), P.6 [https://www.nsinursingsolutions.com/documents/library/nsi\\_national\\_health\\_care\\_retention\\_report.pdf](https://www.nsinursingsolutions.com/documents/library/nsi_national_health_care_retention_report.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Global Data, *Maryland Nurse Workforce Projections: 2021-35* (June 2022), p. 28 <https://mhaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Maryland-Nurse-Workforce-Projections-GlobalData.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> J. Margo Brooks, et al., *Nursing Staffing and Postsurgical Outcomes in Black Adults*, *J. Am. Geriatrics Soc.*, Vol. 60, Issue 6, p.1078-84 (2012), <https://agsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1532-5415.2012.03990.x>.