



SB411/HB624

Safe Staffing Act of 2026

Position: **FAV**

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Aaron Fletcher. I've worked in the Facilities department at my hospital as a plumber for the last five years. Short staffing is an inconvenience at best and a safety issue at worst. I urge a **favorable** report on the Safe Staffing Act because I care about the safety of hospital patients and about the safety of my coworkers. Safety is priority #1.

I'm responsible for a wide variety of tasks from maintaining plumbing and heating, to sprinkler systems, water treatment, water heater maintenance, fixture repairs and medical gas lines. Having running water and functioning systems is crucial for sanitation and for the hospital to be able to run effectively. Repairs need to be done in a timely manner so minor issues don't turn into an emergency.

When we don't have enough workers, employees can't spend as much time on repairs as would be considered a best practice in the trades industry because we have to cover someone else's repairs too. **Sometimes when repairs are prolonged when we don't have enough staff, we may have to shut down patient rooms, impacting how long patients wait to get admitted to the hospital or forcing them to endure the discomfort of being moved to a new room.**

Many in my department are working overtime to cover staff shortages. While we do get compensated financially for overtime, we are now working more hours more consistently on less sleep. That impacts our health over time. Rest is necessary for personal wellbeing and also for optimal work performance.

I've worked in the trades for many years, and the typical culture of trades people is we tend to stay in jobs for a long time. But, that is not the case at the hospital where I work. I have seen more tradespeople quit in my time here than I have at any other job. Reasons cited for quitting are issues around scheduling, low pay, and a dictatorial workplace culture. When workers raise these issues to management, they are only loyal to their way of doing things. They don't utilize the experience we have from other jobs we've had that could actually improve the way things are done.

The Safe Staffing Act would help rectify these issues by taking workers' experience into account, and help to make sure the best interest of the patients and the hospital is served. It would help attract more people to work here. Giving people a voice goes a long way. Workers would put in more effort if our suggestions were meaningfully incorporated into the safe staffing plan. Please vote YES on this bill.

In Unity,
Aaron Fletcher