

# SENATE BILL 700

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CF 2lr3147

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By: **Senator Klausmeier**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2022

Assigned to: Finance

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Department of Health – Prevent Workplace Violence in Health Care**  
3 **Settings Public Awareness Campaign Workgroup**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Secretary of Health to establish the Prevent Workplace  
5 Violence in Health Care Settings Public Awareness Campaign Workgroup to develop  
6 a public awareness campaign on preventing workplace violence in health care  
7 settings and to create a plan for implementing the campaign; and generally relating  
8 to the Prevent Workplace Violence in Health Care Settings Public Awareness  
9 Campaign Workgroup.

### Preamble

10  
11 WHEREAS, According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration,  
12 approximately 75% of the workplace assaults reported annually occurred in health care  
13 settings; and

14 WHEREAS, Workers in health care settings are four times more likely to be victims  
15 of workplace violence than workers in other settings; and

16 WHEREAS, Violence–related injuries are four times more likely to cause health care  
17 workers to take time off from work than other kinds of injuries; and

18 WHEREAS, Alarminglly, the actual number of violent incidents involving health care  
19 is much likely higher than reported, because episodes of workplace violence are grossly  
20 underreported; and

21 WHEREAS, The experience of workplace violence has not only physical  
22 consequences, but personal, emotional, and professional consequences as well; and

23 WHEREAS, Hospitals and health care providers are actively working to prevent  
24 workplace violence with electronic systems for reporting and tracking incidences of

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 workplace violence, implementing zero tolerance policies, providing training on  
2 de-escalation techniques, increasing security, and disseminating personal wearable safety  
3 alarms; and

4 WHEREAS, While health care providers were lauded as health care heroes and  
5 celebrated at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, today they are experiencing an  
6 alarming rise in violence in the workplace; and

7 WHEREAS, The increase in workplace violence is contributing to the burnout of  
8 health care professionals who are leaving the profession or changing practice locations; and

9 WHEREAS, Having an increased public awareness of the magnitude of and  
10 consequences associated with workplace violence in health care settings would help combat  
11 this phenomenon; now, therefore,

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
13 That:

14 (a) (1) The Secretary of Health shall establish a Prevent Workplace Violence  
15 in Health Care Settings Public Awareness Campaign Workgroup.

16 (2) The Workgroup shall include the following members, appointed by the  
17 Secretary:

18 (i) at least one licensed health care provider, including a provider  
19 who has experienced workplace violence;

20 (ii) at least one individual who works in a hospital;

21 (iii) at least one individual who works in a nursing home;

22 (iv) at least one public communications professional;

23 (v) at least one individual who works in a facility that provides  
24 mental health services;

25 (vi) at least one individual who works in a facility that provides  
26 treatment for substance abuse disorders;

27 (vii) at least one individual who works in a facility that provides  
28 health care services to individuals with disabilities;

29 (viii) at least one representative who works to provide security  
30 services at a health care facility; and

31 (ix) any other representative that the Secretary determines  
32 necessary.

1 (b) The Workgroup shall:

2 (1) develop a public awareness campaign on preventing workplace violence  
3 in health care settings to:

4 (i) provide the public with information on:

5 1. the magnitude of incidences of workplace violence in  
6 health care settings in the State; and

7 2. the consequences of workplace violence in health care  
8 settings in the State; and

9 (ii) urge the public to respect the State's health care providers and  
10 protect the State's health care providers from workplace violence;

11 (2) recognize and accommodate the needs of patients with mental health  
12 disorders, substance abuse disorders, and disabilities in the development of the campaign;  
13 and

14 (3) create a plan for implementing the public awareness campaign,  
15 including distributing information on workplace violence in a health care setting in the  
16 State.

17 (c) On or before November 1, 2022, the Workgroup shall report to the Senate  
18 Finance Committee and the House Health and Government Operations Committee, in  
19 accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, on the public awareness  
20 campaign developed under subsection (b) of this section.

21 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June  
22 1, 2022.