



Bill Title: SB720 - Hospitals - Clinical Staffing Committees and Plans - Establishment (Safe Staffing Act of 2025)

Position: Support (FAV)

To: Senate Finance Committee

From: Erica Puentes, Progressive Maryland Legislative Coordinator on behalf of Progressive Maryland

Date: March 4, 2025

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Progressive Maryland is pleased to offer **a favorable testimony in support of SB720-- Hospitals - Clinical Staffing Committees and Plans - Establishment (Safe Staffing Act of 2025)**. Progressive Maryland (PM) is a statewide grassroots group working for a more robust, equitable and patient centered healthcare system. PM is proud to be part of the Patient Worker Collaborative, a coalition representing more than a million Marylanders, that has come together to raise concerns about emergency room wait times and the ongoing hospital staffing shortage that contributes to them.

Like all of you, we regularly hear stories from our members about very long and frustrating wait times in emergency rooms. During a recent member call, one of our members shared a story about waiting in the Hopkins ER from 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 a.m. the following day—an exhausting 16-hour wait before a doctor finally saw him. Given the critical staffing shortage in hospitals and the need for more nurses, the Safe Staffing Act of 2025 offers an excellent remedy to what is ailing our emergency rooms. Creating safe staffing conditions will help our hospitals recruit and retain the workforce they need to meet Marylander's needs.

This legislation gives hospitals clear guidance to develop nurse staffing committees and staffing plans that will better serve the goals of staff retention, workplace safety, and most importantly, patient care. It's not acceptable for our state to have the worst ER wait time record in the country year after year. SB720 will allow Maryland to join nine other U.S. states who have taken steps to create blended staffing committees, staffing plans, and public reporting requirements to improve the way we deliver care.

Progressive Maryland urges a favorable report on SB720.