



One Park Place | Suite 475 | Annapolis, MD 21401-3475
1-866-542-8163 | Fax: 410-837-0269
aarp.org/md | md@aarp.org | twitter: @aarpm
facebook.com/aarpm

SB 720 Hospitals - Clinical Staffing Committees and Plans - Establishment (Safe Staffing Act of 2025)
Senate Finance Committee
March 4, 2025
FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Tammy Bresnahan; I am the Senior Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of AARP Maryland who represents over 850,000 members in strong support of SB 720, the Safe Staffing Act of 2025. This critical legislation, which mandates the establishment of clinical staffing committees and plans in hospitals, is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of both patients and healthcare workers. We thank Senator Augustine for his leadership on SB 720.

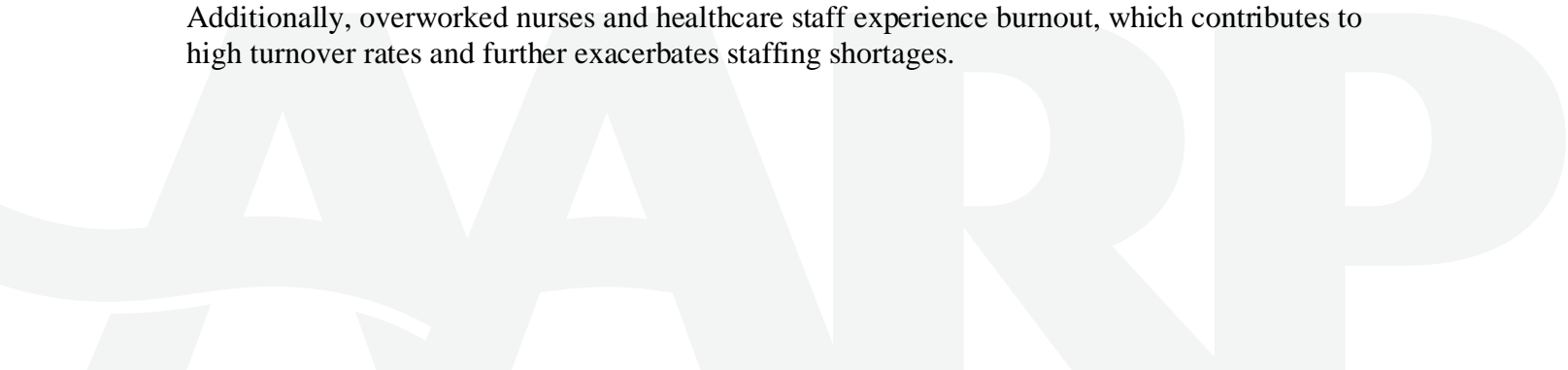
As an organization that advocates for the health and safety of older Americans, AARP recognizes the urgent need for SB 720. Across our state, hospital emergency rooms and critical care departments are experiencing chronic understaffing, placing undue strain on healthcare workers and putting patients at risk. Ensuring adequate staffing levels is essential to delivering high-quality, timely, and effective medical care.

SB 720 Offers a Viable Solution by:

- Establishing safe staffing committees in every hospital, ensuring that direct care workers—those on the front lines of patient care—have a voice in staffing decisions.
- Requiring that at least 50% of committee members be direct care workers, bringing essential, firsthand expertise to the development of safe staffing plans.
- Mandating the creation of a clinical staffing plan, based on patient numbers and acuity, to promote effective and responsive patient care.
- Requiring annual reviews of staffing plans to assess their effectiveness and implement necessary updates, ensuring continuous improvement.
- Promoting transparency by mandating that each hospital publicly post its clinical staffing plan, allowing patients and families to make informed healthcare decisions.

Protecting Patients and Supporting Healthcare Workers

AARP firmly believes that safe staffing levels are a fundamental component of quality healthcare. When hospitals are understaffed, patients—particularly older adults—face increased risks, including longer wait times, medication errors, and preventable complications. Additionally, overworked nurses and healthcare staff experience burnout, which contributes to high turnover rates and further exacerbates staffing shortages.



By passing SB 720, Maryland will join other states that have successfully implemented similar staffing regulations, resulting in improved patient outcomes and better working conditions for healthcare professionals. The bill is supported by a coalition of patient advocacy groups, reflecting a broad consensus that safe staffing is essential to our healthcare system.

Conclusion

We respectfully urge Committee to pass SB 720 to protect our patients, safeguard our healthcare workers, and strengthen the integrity of our hospital systems. Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at tbresnahan@aarp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.