



Maryland
Hospital Association

**House Bill 1308-
Crime of Violence - Medical Facilities and Places of Worship - Penalty (Sacred Places
Safety Act)**

Position: *Support*
March 11, 2025
House Judiciary Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 1308.

Hospitals are places of health and healing, yet too often they become sites of violence.

Health care workers experience 75% of all workplace assaults reported nationwide, [resulting](#) in 18,750 injuries annually. This violence [includes](#) physical assaults leading to broken bones, bruises, and scratches, as well as verbal abuse and sexual harassment. [Alarming](#)ly, 73% of aggravated assaults and 86% of simple assaults against health care workers come from patients, family members, or visitors.

Recent national headlines shine a light on devastating acts of violence taking place in hospitals, including an incident at a [Pennsylvania hospital](#) in which a police officer was killed, staff were taken hostage, and a doctor, nurse, and custodian were injured. Another attack, this time in [Florida](#), included a brutal assault on a nurse.

No hospital employee should risk their own safety in the service of others. Maryland hospitals have implemented significant measures to protect employees, patients, and visitors. These efforts include redesigning patient care areas to improve visibility and safety, implementing de-escalation training, post-incident counseling support for employees and collecting data on incidents that occur.

MHA also collaborated with the Maryland Patient Safety Center and the Maryland Health Care Commission on [Care Flows Both Ways](#), a state-funded workplace violence prevention campaign, which is underway now.

Despite these efforts, the statistics remain staggering. Six in 10 nurses report considering leaving their jobs or profession due to workplace violence—exacerbating the staffing crisis and putting patient care at further risk. MHA conducted a pilot survey of 32 hospitals in 2024 regarding the number of incidents of violence occurring between July – December 2023. Hospitals reported 1,811 incidents. Out of this total, only 6% were recordable based on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) definition. To be an [OSHA recordable event](#), the illness or

injury must require medical treatment beyond first aid, result in loss of consciousness, require one or more days away from work following the date of the incident, require restricted work or transfer to another job, result in any significant injury or illness diagnosed by a physician or other licensed health care professional or result in a fatality. The majority of the violence that occurs may not rise to the definition of a crime of violence, but our health care workers are still facing serious injuries and threats.

MHA believes that every patient, visitor, and hospital employee should feel safe and secure when in medical facilities. House Bill 1308 sends a clear and necessary message: acts of violence in medical facilities and places of worship will not be tolerated. This bill aligns with Maryland's commitment to environments where healing and recovery can occur free from the threat of violence. No nurse, physician, or hospital staff member should ever have to choose between their safety and their duty to care for others.

We ask the Committee to stand with Maryland's hospitals and health care providers to ensure a safe and secure environment for all.

For these reasons, we request a favorable report on HB 1308.

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