



SB411/HB624
Safe Staffing Act of 2026
Position: **FAV**

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Anita Haskins. I'm an Emergency Room Technician (ERT) and have been working at a hospital in Baltimore for 29 years. It's not an easy job, but I love it because I care for my patients. I'm upset about under staffing at my hospital because patients don't get the full spectrum of care they want when there aren't enough workers. I urge a **favorable** report on the Safe Staffing Act.

Our main role as ERTs is to sit with behavioral health patients and total care patients. I also apply temporary splints, and do wound cleaning and dressing changes. When we have enough staff, ERTs are also responsible for vital signs, helping patients go to the bathroom, assisting nurses, and doing "sharps checks" on psychiatric patients. But when we are understaffed, nurses have to do parts of our jobs because ERTs need to sit with patients who can't be left alone. Sometimes we can't even go to the restroom because there is no one else to sit with the patient.

Workers are getting injured on the job because of unsafe staffing, including me. My injury was caused by a patient who had been brought in by the police. Typically, the charge nurse or the triage nurse would be responsible for doing vital signs on patients in that particular circumstance, but we were short that night, so I was asked to do her vitals. When I leaned in to take her vitals, the patient headbutted me. Since then, I have experienced headaches and blurred vision. I had to take several days off work and worked a reduced schedule for three months, leaving my coworkers further short staffed for that duration of time. If we had the proper number of staff that night, I may not have been injured because we would have had more help calming the patient down.

I support the Safe Staffing Act because we are the ones working in these conditions so we should have a voice in the solutions. When we have better staffing, we can treat more patients, and we can be safe while we are keeping patients safe. Please vote YES on this bill. Thank you.

In Unity,

Anita Haskins