



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

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is David Saucedo. I've worked at a hospital for a total of 9 years and I am a member of 1199SEIU. Have you ever heard the phrase "Safety in numbers?" While this may sound like a cliché, in reality, it is undeniably true! Short staffing is unsafe for patients and health care workers. That is why I support the Safe Staffing Act, and I urge you to issue a favorable report.

For many years, I worked as a cook for six and a half years in the hospital. We once operated multiple kitchens, allowing us to provide more intimate meals for the patients—an approach that fostered a sense of care and attention. However, management decided to cut kitchen staff. As a result, my job was terminated, sixteen cooks lost their jobs that day. I chose to transfer to the Environmental Service Department which I have been working for two and half years. Meanwhile, the dietary workers in the main kitchen have taken in our load of work. With fewer dietary workers responsible for more patients, the remaining staff must work even faster in environments filled with hazards, hot oils, wet floors, sharp knives. Kitchens are chaotic environments because they are so fast paced. It can be incredibly dangerous to increase the workload when there aren't enough staff, leading to increased risk of injuries for workers and compromising the quality of patient care.

As a union delegate, I listen to all my coworkers, not just those in my department. The Geriatric Nursing Assistants told me they have one four letter word for you. HELP! Now they are also covering dietary responsibilities because of short staffing in the kitchen. Taking trays, calling requests, cleaning food spills, and all this takes time. GNAs are floating from floor to floor. Fifteen patients to one GNA, in a 12-hour shift, bath, lifting out of bed, helping the restroom, helping the walk, making their beds, drop off food trays. This is unsafe for patients because if they ring the call bell, their primary caretaker may be on an entirely different floor, unable to hear them. What happens to that patient in an emergency situation?

Anyone could end up in a hospital one day. If we don't fix the short staffing crisis now, even more workers and patients will face unsafe conditions. We need more GNA's, and we need more healthcare workers across the board. Passing this bill will help our hospitals get real solutions about how to fix the staffing crisis and retain more healthcare workers. So, if you want to make sure you and your loved ones get proper care, vote **YES** on the Safe Staffing Act. Thank you.

In Unity,

David Saucedo