



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

To Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Eric'ka Dunkins. I am a Registered Nurse, working the night shift in the Labor & Delivery unit at a hospital in Prince George's County. My unit has 27 beds, but we only have 2 to 4 RNs on shift at a time. We don't have techs or charge nurses; many nights we don't even have a unit clerk. I urge a **favorable** report on The Safe Staffing Act of 2026.

Patients aren't statistics, they are real people who face consequences when we are chronically understaffed. Last month, an ante-partum patient ruptured. We called for a doctor, but no one came to assist us for hours. We had to perform an emergency C-section so the baby would survive. If we had enough staff, the patient's condition likely would not have escalated to that extreme. Recently, we had an ante-partum patient's blood sugar drop down to 12. With proper staffing, we could have properly monitored her blood sugar and food intake, but we were short, so that wasn't possible. We caught it right as she was about to become comatose. I still think about what happened to her every time I go to work, and it haunts me. These cases take a mental toll on nurses. We choose to do this work because we care and we want to help people, and short staffing is preventing us from doing that to the best of our ability.

Nurses are burning out because of the mental and physical stress we are faced with. I'm 24 and am already experiencing burnout. I paid for four years of school to become a nurse. I worked hard to get to where I am, and I want to know that I am making a difference when I clock in every day. But nurses in my generation are overwhelmed at the prospect of facing this short staffing crisis for the entirety of our careers.

**When younger nurses bring our ideas to management about how to fix the staffing issues in our hospital, we are belittled, and our suggestions are not implemented. That is why so many nurses my age quit. Having a seat at the table to give our perspective will help more nurses in my generation stay in healthcare long term.** That is why the Safe Staffing Act is so vital. Please vote YES on this bill. Thank you.

In Unity, Eric'Ka Dunkins