

H.R. 2530 - Nurse Staffing Standards for Hospital Patient Safety and Quality Care Act of 2023

Objective: On behalf of the nursing profession, as registered nurses, it is our goal that H.R. 2530 will become law. This act increases awareness of and eliminates unsafe practices while improving patients' and nurses' health and well-being.

Overview of Policy - According to Congress.gov (n.d.), H.R. 2530:

- Introduced in the House on April 6, 2023
- Sponsored by Rep. Janice D. Schakowsky
- Referred by the House to Subcommittee on Health on April 14, 2023
- Mandates hospitals to devise and submit to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) a staffing plan that adheres to specific minimum nurse-to-patient ratios per unit, a crucial step in ensuring patient care. Offers whistleblower protection for nurses who refuse unsafe assignments and advocate for patient safety
- Supports the workforce: Provides stipends to increase nurse recruitment and retention, addressing the nursing shortage

Background

- Hospitals seek to lower costs and boost profits/reimbursement returns by decreasing expenditures on nursing staff. This results in a higher patient-to-nurse ratio that decreases patient safety and satisfaction (Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO [DPE], 2019).
- High patient-to-nurse ratios are strongly associated with employee fatigue, injuries, and health problems that necessitate time away from work (DPE, 2019).

Evidence

- A 2020 Harris poll found that 91% of the public supports minimal safe staffing standards in hospitals. (NursesEverywhere, 2021).
- A 2013 study found that higher nurse staffing levels contribute to positive financial performance for hospitals as improved productivity, reductions in secondary infections, and reduced length of patient stays lead to cost savings in the long term (DPE, 2019).

Recommendations: In addition to voting for this bill, we respectfully recommend that you -

- Advocate to allocate funds for evidence-based, real-time research for both sustainable staffing systems and analysis of their economic impact
- Be critical of policies/legislation that seek to replace the roles of qualified nurses with less trained or unlicensed staff to lower costs, which could lead to a decrease in the quality of patient care and an increase in staff burnout
- Support initiatives that call for transparency in reporting staff levels and patient outcomes both internally and externally, to include the general public

Contact information: Michelle Shufelt (mruhl001@odu.edu); Linda Williamson (lwill128@odu.edu); Kristel Dunford (kdunf002@odu.edu)

References

Congress.gov. (n.d.). *H.R.2530 - Nurse Staffing Standards for Hospital Patient Safety and Quality Care Act of 2023*. Congress.gov. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/2530>
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NursesEverywhere. (2021). *Expand nursing care survey: A research brief* https://3aaa9248-e569-4da8-adac4c9b14e503e.filesusr.com/ugd/d52815_ea23c1bba67c46eebe9692cf2b69a54b.pdf

ODU Honor Code Statement

We, the students of Old Dominion University, aspire to be honest and forthright in our academic endeavors. Therefore, we will practice honesty and integrity and be guided by the tenets of the Monarch Creed. We will meet the challenges to be beyond reproach in our actions and our words. We will conduct ourselves in a manner that commands the dignity and respect that we also give to others.

~ Michelle Shufelt, Kristel Dunford, Linda Williamson