

25+ Years of *Independent Practice* as Healthcare Providers for the People of Maine

May 2, 2023

Members of the Committee on Labor and Housing

I am a citizen from South Portland and work as a nurse practitioner in primary care in the greater Portland area. I am writing to you on behalf of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association in support of LD 1639 'An Act to Address Unsafe Staffing of Nurses and Improve Patient Care.'

We support LD 1639 which will improve patient safety and health outcomes, and appreciate Senator Brenner and the co-sponsors for presenting this bill. An increasing body of evidence shows appropriate nurse staffing contributes to improved patient outcomes and greater satisfaction for both patients and staff.

Unsafe staffing ratios put patients and staff at risk. Advanced Practice Registered Nurses order high risk medications and orders for many complex hospital patients. We are concerned that the current nurse-patient ratios leave these patients at risk because the nurse is taking care of too many patients unable to monitor the patient closely, and this can lead to complications and death. Nurse burn-out rates are increasing and if our healthcare system continues to force our nurses to practice in this way, we will continue to lose skilled nurses.

Safe nurse staffing is essential to both the nursing profession and to the overall healthcare system. Studies have shown that appropriate nurse staffing helps achieve clinical and economic improvements in patient care, including: reduction in medication errors, patient mortality, hospital readmissions, and length of stay; improved safety outcomes by reducing incidents of falls, pressure ulcers, and healthcare-associated infections; reduced patient care costs through avoidance of unplanned readmissions; enhancement of patient satisfaction and HCAHPS scores; and prevention of nurse fatigue.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill as we urge you to vote in favor of LD 1639. Please feel free to contact me at the number below for more information and references or if you wish to discuss further.

Respectfully submitted,

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Legislative Committee Member

Maine Nurse Practitioner Association