



Testimony in Support of SB 823 A

May 16, 2019

House Committee on Health Care

Matthew Calzia, BSN, RN

Chair Salinas, Vice-Chairs Hayden and Nosse and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to consider Senate Bill 823 A and consider experiences of front-line health care workers regarding workplace violence in direct care settings. My name is Matt Calzia and I am a registered nurse and Oregon Nurses Association member working in Springfield. Our hospital facility recently experienced two traumatic instances that highlighted the medical center's deficits in planning and lack of certain adequate protocols in place to best prevent incidences of violence in our workplace.

I am fortunate in that I haven't been physically harmed but have all too frequently been witness to violence in the workplace. I myself have received threats from patient interactions as well as visitors and often when those instances are reported there is no clear follow-up process that I have an awareness of. I have also unfortunately seen my colleagues threatened and even harassed, at times stemming from individual characteristics or circumstances that are inherently outside of their control.

My anecdotal experiences are not enough to provide guidance on developing and implementing evidence-based solutions. This is why we need to ensure accurate collection and dissemination of instances of violence in the health care sector. SB 823 A ensures we can collect the proper data to develop realistic prevention and safety strategies and also notably seeks to shift the persistent current culture of underreporting of violence by assuring protections for employees who come forward to communicate incidents that occur to them and/or their colleagues.

The continuing prevalence of workplace violence in health care can often severely limit and undermine the quality of care we are able to provide to patients across the state. We need SB 823 A to aid in better protecting the health care workforce that provides critical care to patients across our state and that remains a vital component of our communities.

I urge your support of SB 823 A.

Thank you,

Matthew Calzia, BSN, RN