

Submitter: Tracy Graham

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business

Measure: SB1549

I have been an ED nurse for the past five years. I have watched as my work family was torn apart during the period of this pandemic. As nurses, we have been abused and underpaid for what we have endured. As a result, RNs continue to leave in droves due to burnout.

SB1549 will only contribute to the nursing shortage crisis by capping our wages. There will be less incentives for the nurses left working. It would undercut our ability to collectively bargain fair wages within our hospitals and unions for money we deserve for the pivotal role we play in treating patients.

Minimal incentives were offered to RNs at the bedside throughout the pandemic. Meanwhile, hospital executives and administrators made millions in annual wages and bonus' for their "hard work". This is insulting as nurses have put their blood, sweat and tears into this community over the past two years. The healthcare system is corrupt and broken, don't point at nurse wages as the culprit.

If you open the door to suggesting you can cap nurse wages, even if it relates to agencies at this time, this state will be in a worse position as we will feel undervalued yet again. More nurses will leave the bedside. We are tired. Don't create additional reasons for nurses to leave the profession or chase contracts in other states.