

Submitter: Melissa Ozmore

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2697

Good afternoon,

I support HB2697. I have been working in the medical setting for over 20 years in various settings. Most recently the hospital setting. I left this position for an array of reasons. One primary reason is relative to the lack of "care" I feel I can provide safely to my patients in an environment where I do not have resources or time to provide compassionate, safe, relevant care either in an acute situation or preventatively. We have too many issues in this country that stem from lack of preventative care, lack of resources and the Future of Nursing report is all about social determinants of health. Hospitals do not have the staff. The nurses are taking more than what is safe to care for their patients. Nurses are at times only able to do the minimum to keep their patients safe because there is not enough of them to go around. When I started my position years ago I had no more than 14 patients a day. In an 8 hour day with several meetings in a day, I would be responsible for enrolling these patients in skilled nursing facilities, coordination hospice services and having numerous complex conversations with families that do not benefit from a nurse who does not have time to listen. Instead the past several years I was taking up to 20-30 plus patients a day working instead of 1:1 with a doctor working as one care coordinator-with up to 3 physicians.

Charge nurses should not be taking patients while supervising and supporting a team of understaffed nurses and support persons. I have worked in correctional settings and saw the impact of the increase of mental health needs as caregivers are less and less and how lack of support in hospitals leads to homelessness. Many people come in previously walking and independent and have new needs that cannot be thoroughly addressed without more staff. There are increase in readmissions, complications, hospital acquired infections, increased violence. I do not believe the violence from our patients is due to the patient alone. It is due to the lack of ability to provide the care needed when understaffed. You need to have a trauma informed approach that is not rushed. . I could go on with many examples of how the current situation is not conducive providing appropriate care for our community.