

Submitter: Elizabeth Franke

On Behalf Of: ONA

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2697

I truly love providing nursing care and I love the profession of nursing but I experience incredible stress and distress when we are short staffed and I am not able to provide the care that patients deserve. Often we are too busy passing medications and keeping people safe to provide the nursing care the promotes well being, such as walking patients in the hall, sitting down and talking to them about how they are coping, calling family members and updating them on how their loved ones are doing. We have had patients call for assistance to the bathroom and because we didn't have staff to get there soon enough, they got out of bed on their own and fell. Frequently I have patients who want to take a shower, but we don't have the staff to help them do this. We had a patient who had been in the hospital for one month before he got his first full bed bath because it is care that requires at least two people and we did not have the staff to do it.

There are shifts when the various units are forced to fight over scraps, which unit will get a CNA? Which will be shorted one nurse? Or shorted two?

I don't get breaks. I wake up in the middle of the night plagued by things I could not get done or things I wanted to do better. It makes me want to call in sick, which means the next shift will be short. It makes me want to leave the bedside and find a job where I don't feel stress constantly pumping through my body. It is not sustainable, for me as an individual or for the nursing profession at large. We cannot continue to operate like this. 3 years into the pandemic and it still feels like we are working through a revolving door of crisis. Please consider passing HB 2697 to ensure that nurses can continue to provide the care that patients deserve.