

Submitter: Jessica Reed  
On Behalf Of: patients and community  
Committee: House Committee On Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4074

To the house health care committee:

I am writing in opposition to HB 4074. As a nurse of almost 12 years I can speak directly to the unsafe conditions that occur when nurses are expected to care for more patients. At a time when budget cuts are rampant, nurses are expected to do more with less already. Less support staff, less access to supplies, less time with our patients. If we are tasked with taking on additional patients to our workload, each patient gets less time with a nurse. If you've never been hospitalized, let me explain that nurses are the eyes and ears for doctors. We are the ones keeping a close watch over vitals, lab results, the way lungs & hearts sound, IV infusions etc, we report to the doctors if we think patients are responding well to medications or if something different needs to be tried. If we miss something or don't get to it in time - the ramifications can be life threatening. Imagine being hooked up to a cardiac IV medication that affects your blood pressure and heart rate: nursing starts the medication and monitors your vitals sometimes every minute to see how you respond. Now imagine your nurse has an additional patient assigned and that patient also has something critical to attend to, perhaps they're struggling to breathe and need extra attention and medications. Your blood pressure is now dropping low and the nurse can't step away from the patient who is nearly not breathing to attend to your blood pressure medication which needs to be titrated or turned off and communicated to the Dr. Patients will suffer, potentially permanent injuries or deaths will occur.

I implore you to listen to the bedside nurses screaming about safe staffing saving lives, this is real. Hospital systems are looking at this from the standpoint of budgets and bottom lines. Nurses are looking at this from the standpoint of life and death. Our patients are our own community members, neighbors, grandmothers, babies, your voters, perhaps even you.