



SUPPORT SENATE BILL 1863

Protect Hospital Workers from Violence

Senate Sponsors Sen. John Curran – Sen. Julie Morrison, Sen. Bill Cunningham, Sen. Javier Cervantes, Sen. Neil Anderson, Sen. Laura Murphy

IHA Position: IHA strongly supports Senate Bill 1863, bipartisan legislation to provide security for our healthcare heroes, who are being physically, verbally and emotionally abused by patients and visitors at alarming rates. Given statewide and national healthcare staffing challenges, it is imperative we are able to protect the safety of our healthcare professionals as they work to care for our communities. We urge Illinois lawmakers to co-sponsor and vote **YES** on Senate Bill 1863.

Background: Illinois hospitals report that since the COVID-19 public health emergency began, healthcare providers face increasing numbers of serious assaults and violence in their local Emergency Departments and hospital settings. Nurses, clinicians and hospital staff are being punched and kicked, sustaining broken noses, jaws, arms and dislocated shoulders. While trying to care for their patients, healthcare professionals have been bitten, choked, shoved and spit on.

- Healthcare workers are five times more likely to experience workplace violence than employees from any other industry.
- In one study, 44% of nurses reported experiencing physical violence while on the job.
- Another analysis found that two nurses are assaulted every hour in the United States.
- 85% of emergency physicians believe the rate of violence experienced in EDs has increased over the past five years, and 45% indicate it has greatly increased.

Violent interactions at healthcare facilities tie up valuable resources, can delay urgently needed care for other patients and increase the potential for adverse medical events.

- Nearly nine in ten emergency physicians agree violence in the ER harms patient care (89%).

Assaults and intimidation make it more difficult to retain nurses, doctors, and other clinical staff. Given the national shortage of healthcare professionals, hospitals are already challenged to recruit and retain staff.

- One global survey found that 25% of healthcare workers said they were willing to quit because of on-the-job violence.

Healthcare leaders will no longer accept the notion that violence in the workplace “comes with the job.”

Senate Bill 1863 clarifies that healthcare workers are provided the same protections in the law as workers in care settings like nursing homes, daycares and schools are currently afforded when assaults occur in those workplaces. The legislation includes violence against a healthcare worker in a healthcare setting as an aggravating factor a judge can consider during sentencing, while providing essential protections for vulnerable populations in healthcare settings that commit violence, if conduct is due to a severe mental illness.

PLEASE CO-SPONSOR AND SUPPORT SENATE BILL 1863