



Representative Don Manning
59th Ohio House District

HB 144 Sponsor Testimony

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 144.

This bill does **NOT** prohibit a nurse from being able to work overtime. The bill is meant to address the issue of nurses feeling compelled to work **unscheduled** overtime, which can result in negative health consequences for patients and nurses.

This bill passed the House (as HB 456) in the last GA by a vote of 77-11, and there was no opposition offered in committee.

According to various studies found through the U.S. National Library of Medicine and National Institutes of Health, excess work and overtime can result in negative outcomes for patients and nurses. In addition, non-overtime nurse staffing has shown to result in improved patient health outcomes.

There have been reports from the nursing industry of employers threatening disciplinary action, including termination or reporting patient abandonment, if nurses do not work unscheduled overtime. Patient abandonment can be a reason used by a professional licensing board to take action on a license, including revocation. An example of this would be after a nurse completes a 12-hour shift and feels compelled, due to negative professional consequences, to stay for unscheduled overtime work.

The intent of the legislation is to prohibit a hospital from requiring a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse to work in excess of an agreed upon, predetermined, scheduled full-time or part-time workweek as a condition of continued employment. Hospitals will be prohibited from terminating employment, proposing to terminate employment, taking disciplinary or retaliatory action, or proposing to take disciplinary or retaliatory action solely because a nurse chooses not to work overtime.

Under the bill, nurses may still voluntarily work overtime. In addition, hospitals may offer overtime. Hospitals may request or schedule overtime during health care disasters; declarations of emergency; prudently unanticipated emergencies, unforeseen events, or influxes of patients that result in care needs beyond reasonable predictable levels and increased needs in personnel to ensure safe patient care; situations when a nurse is actively engaged in an ongoing medical or surgical procedure.

This bill is meant to ensure proper policies are in place that protect the health of patients and nurses. I want to thank you for your time and attention to this matter and am happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Committees:

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**www.ohiohouse.gov
77 S. High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111**

Contact Information:

Office: 614-466-6107
FAX: 614-719-3959
Email: rep59@ohiohouse.gov