

HB 285 – Nurse Workforce & Safe Patient Care Act
Proponent Testimony by Amy Law, RN

Chair Swearingen, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the Health Provider Services Committee.

I have been a nurse for 42 years in a hospital and I have seen a lot of changes in medicines over the years, all the advancements in medications and procedures and technology. But the saddest thing I have seen is the un-safeness of short staffing!!! Expecting a nurse to take quality care of patients, who are sicker than ever, with minimal support staff is a massive disservice to the patients and the nurse. Nurses are burning out and not coming to the bedside to work, and the patients are getting less than quality care, baths are non-existent and linen changes occur at discharge. Read the ONA code red report, the harm to patients 30 days prior to and after discharge is VERY concerning.

I have worked the med surg floor with just myself and another nurse for 13 patients, no tech and no secretary. Trying to take care of the patients and be responsible for passing meals, and answering call lights and doing my duties. We also had grossly overweight patients that the 2 of us couldn't even turn, let alone do dressing changes on. I went home every shift at 9pm or later, in tears because none of my patients even got their face washed let alone teeth cleaned. This is inhumane care for sick patients. I barely even had a minute to talk to the patients; let alone show any form of compassion. This comes about because the hospitals know a nurse will kill herself to take care of her patients, and the less nurses they have to pay is more money in their pockets. I am not sure when profits became the goal for taking care of the sick and terminally ill patients. But it is not the place for it!!!

We need HB 285 passed to bring safety and quality care back to the patients and the nurses to be able to do their jobs efficiently. There are plenty of nurses in Ohio who said they would come back to the bedside if there are staffing ratios in place. These ratios will ensure less medication errors, improve patient outcomes and create a safer working environment for the nurses and health care professionals.

I can not URGE you enough to carefully consider PASSING this bill, because it may be your loved one, family or yourself in hospital one day needing that nurse to be focused on YOUR care and giving you the best outcome possible for your stay. That is all any nurse wants, is to HELP their patients and be an advocate for them.

Thank you for time in reading my statement.

Amy Law RN