

HB 285 – Nurse Workforce & Safe Patient Care Act Proponent Testimony by Shanequa Nobblen, RN

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

As a dedicated bedside Registered Nurse in Akron, Ohio, I wholeheartedly support Ohio Nurses Association's (ONA) House Bill 285, which aims to establish minimum staffing standards and enhance workforce development in our healthcare system.

HB285 resonates deeply with me. At times, I have had to care for up to 8 patients on an understaffed medical-surgical floor. One time, a patient's condition deteriorated because I couldn't monitor them closely enough. Thankfully, they recovered, but the incident left me shaken. It also left my other patients without my direct care until that patient was moved to where they could receive a higher level care. I realized that safe staffing isn't just a numbers game; it's about patients' lives.

For years, I've witnessed firsthand the impact of inadequate staffing on patient care. Insufficient nurse-to-patient ratios lead to:

- Delayed treatments and medications
- Increased medical errors
- Longer hospital stays
- Higher readmission rates
- Burnout and turnover among nursing staff

I've experienced the emotional toll of watching colleagues leave the profession due to burnout and the guilt of knowing they couldn't provide the care their patients deserved due to understaffing.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in our healthcare system, particularly regarding workforce shortages. HB285 tackles this issue by:

1. Investing in nursing education and training programs
2. Supporting loan forgiveness and scholarship initiatives
3. Encouraging diversity and inclusion in the nursing workforce
4. Fostering collaborative partnerships between healthcare providers and educational institutions

By passing HB285, we can:

1. Improve patient outcomes and satisfaction
2. Enhance nurse well-being, job satisfaction, and retention
3. Address healthcare disparities and inequities
4. Ensure Ohio's healthcare system remains competitive and innovative

Personally, HB285's passage would mean:

- Reduced stress and burnout
- Increased job satisfaction
- Ability to provide optimal care
- Hope for a sustainable nursing career

I urge lawmakers to prioritize patient safety and nursing excellence by supporting HB285.

Signed,

Shanequa Nobblen