



District 1

Donald E Blatt
District Director

Teresa Cassady
Assistant Director

April 25, 2023

President of the Senate Garlin Gilchrist
123 West Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933

Minority Leader Aric Nesbitt
123 West Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933

Speaker of the Assembly Joseph Tate
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48909

Minority Leader Matt Hall
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48909

RE: United Steelworkers supports a Michigan bill to establish safe staffing ratios for all job classes in health care settings.

Dear President of the Senate Gilchrist, Minority Leader Nesbitt, Speaker of the Assembly Tate, and Minority Leader Hall:

On behalf of the members and health care workers of the United Steelworkers Union (USW) in Michigan, I write to you in support of action by the legislature to improve staffing levels and safety for workers in the healthcare sector. Our union is the largest industrial union in North America, representing workers in steel, aluminum, and other metals; paper; rubber; glass; cement; chemicals; refining; other industrial sectors; and the service sector. Our members in Michigan also include workers across healthcare including in long-term care, hospitals, and other facilities.

Last session, H.B. 4016 and S.B. 204 were introduced by Representative Angela Witwer (District 76) and Senator Ed McBroom (District 38), respectively, and these bills aimed to require hospitals to develop and implement a staffing plan for registered nurses. This staffing plan would prevent the overextension of any worker by following the bill's established minimum nurse-to-patient ratios, and thus enable nurses to provide better care for their patients and protect themselves from injury. We believe that similar legislation should be strengthened and reintroduced this session.

Our union has long been an advocate for safe staffing policies in health care settings, not just for registered nurses, but for all health care job classes. In addition to representing registered nurses, our members also work as physicians, ancillary United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union

staff, EMTs, pharmacists, and more. All health care professionals are caregivers, and each one plays an important role in delivering quality patient care. The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that from 2019 to 2021, the health care industry consistently had the highest number of worker injury cases compared to any other sector.¹ Health care workers cite short staffing as a detriment to patient care and work satisfaction, and as a contributing factor to injury on-the-job. These caregivers should have every advantage possible to ensure their safe return from work every day.

We urge the Michigan legislature to again take up this noble pursuit and protect all health care workers who dedicate their lives to caring for others. USW looks forward to working with the legislature toward our shared goal of achieving a safe workplace for all workers, especially for those taking care of others in their most vulnerable moments.

In Solidarity,



Donald E. Blatt
District 1 Director

CC: Representative Witwer
Representative Rogers, Health Policy Committee Chair
Representative Haadsma, Labor Committee Chair
Senator McBroom
Senator Hertel, Health Policy Committee Chair
Senator Cherry, Labor Committee Chair

¹ [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), "Economic News Release: Table 3. Number of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses by selected industry and case types, private industry, 2019-21 (thousands)", April 6, 2023.

