

QUOTES OF SUPPORT

National Nurses United: “Violence in our hospitals and clinics has reached epidemic levels,” *said NNU President Deborah Burger, RN.* “Nurses have been punched, kicked, bitten, and choked or threatened with extreme violence. Tragically, some nurses have even lost their lives after being attacked on the job. This is why we urgently need legislative action to hold our employers accountable, through federal OSHA, for having a prevention plan in place to stop workplace violence before it occurs. We greatly appreciate Senator Baldwin and Representative Courtney for introducing the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act to help protect us at work so we can do our job of caring for you, your loved ones, and our communities”

National Association of Social Workers: “The National Association of Social Workers strongly supports the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act. Social workers provide essential services to individuals, families, and communities, at times at risk to their own safety. We need to do all that we can to prevent workplace violence and protect our healthcare and social services workforce,” *said Anthony Estreet, PhD, MBA, LCSW-C, Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Social Workers.*

AIHA, the American Industrial Hygiene Association: “Workplace violence remains a leading cause of traumatic injury and death in the United States, particularly in health care and social service settings. This issue not only affects workplaces but also leaves lasting scars on families and communities. AIHA's White Paper on the Prevention of Workplace Violence emphasizes that such incidents are often both predictable and preventable. In response, Congress has the opportunity to reduce workplace violence by swiftly passing the bipartisan Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act. This legislation would require the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue a workplace violence prevention standard that requires healthcare and social service sector employers to create and implement a workplace violence prevention plan tailored to meet their specific needs. To protect our workers and communities, we call upon Members of Congress to join their colleagues in supporting this crucial bipartisan bill,” *stated AIHA Chief Executive Officer Lawrence Sloan, MBA, FASAE, CAE.*

AFSCME: Health care and social service workers should not have to put their own lives on the line to help save the lives of others. But all too often, this already overextended workforce faces violent attacks while treating some of the most marginalized members of our communities. Many of these attacks can be prevented or mitigated with proper preparation and planning. However, federal law does not require these basic safety procedures within our health care settings. That needs to change, and it starts with the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act,” *said AFSCME President Lee Saunders.* “This vital piece of legislation would give essential workers the protections they need to do their jobs free of constant fear and danger. It would also allow employers to work together with their employees and unions to tailor safety

plans to their workplaces. We applaud Senator Baldwin and Congressman Courtney for introducing this necessary bill, and on behalf of AFSCME's 1.4 million members, we urge the House and Senate to pass it without delay."

ANA: "We want to thank Representative Joe Courtney and Senator Tammy Baldwin for their support of this monumental piece of legislation," said *American Nurses Association President Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN*. "Acts of violence against nurses and health care professionals must not be tolerated under any circumstances. And employers have an obligation to ensure the safety of their employees. This includes health care institutions which are becoming increasingly violent, dangerous places to work for nurses and other health care professionals. Sadly, many do not even feel safe to report their experiences. This bill ensures that health care employers will protect their patients and their staff, with ongoing prevention measures that include incident reporting and response. And critically, it requires the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to develop and implement specific standards for citations and penalties against employers who fail to take workplace safety seriously. We can, and must, break the cycle of violence against health care professionals. This bill is a step in that direction. I want to thank Representative Courtney and Senator Baldwin for leading the charge to safeguard our nation's nurses."

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: "The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association thanks Representative Courtney, Senator Baldwin, and all of the original cosponsors for introducing the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act," said *2023 ASHA President Robert M. Augustine, PhD, CCC-SLP*. "More than 40% of all ASHA members work in health care settings that include hospitals, residential facilities such as skilled nursing facilities, and nonresidential settings including home health care services. Audiologists and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) provide medically necessary services to maximize health and functional outcomes for quality of life. This important legislation will help ensure that the health care settings where audiologists and SLPs work have effective policies, training, and recordkeeping access in place to prevent violence and protect their health and safety. ASHA looks forward to working with Rep. Courtney and Sen. Baldwin to pass this critical legislation."

American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine: "This legislation will correct the long overdue absence of an OSHA standard to protect healthcare professionals from acts of violence in the workplace. Extensive research shows that these acts are predictable and preventable. We cannot continue to turn a blind eye to the heightened risk they pose to physicians, nurses, and other health professionals as they care for the sick, the elderly, and the mentally ill. I greatly appreciate the commitment and leadership of Senator Baldwin and Representative Courtney on this issue," said *Douglas Martin, MD, FAADEP, FAAFP, FACOEM, President of the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM)*.

American College of Emergency Physicians: "Sadly, thousands of dedicated emergency physicians, nurses, and other emergency department staff continue to experience firsthand the worsening rates of escalating threats and actual violence in the health care workplace, exacerbating provider burnout and harming patient access to care," said *Christopher S. Kang*,

MD, FACEP, president of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP). “Violence must not be just ‘part of the job’ for EMS personnel and emergency care teams, and we cannot accept it in the emergency department or any other patient care setting. This bill will help implement long-overdue federal violence prevention standards, processes, and protections to ensure that emergency physicians can focus on the most important part of our job – you, our patients – without fear for the safety of our patients, ourselves, and our medical teams. ACEP deeply appreciates Representative Courtney, Senator Baldwin, and the bipartisan sponsors of this legislation for their continued leadership in promoting a safer environment for emergency physicians and the millions of patients we serve and care for every year.”

AFT President Randi Weingarten: “Workplace violence in the healthcare industry was rampant before COVID, with the pandemic only exacerbating the safety issues facing frontline workers. That’s why our union launched the Code Red campaign to address workplace violence, secure safe patient limits and other crucial protections to improve the quality of care our patients receive, and it’s why Representative Courtney’s and Senator Baldwin’s bill addressing workplace violence is so crucial.”

“Our nurses, health techs, social service workers and other health professionals deserve much better than the current reality. They take care of us when we need them, have devoted their careers to looking after the aging, the sick and the injured, yet are still begging for basic workplace rights from their employers. I thank Representative Courtney and Senator Baldwin for introducing this crucial bill and urge its quick passage.”

AFGE: “AFGE thanks Representative Courtney and Senator Baldwin for reintroducing the Workplace Violence Prevention Act to protect workers on the job from mistreatment. AFGE represents employees in the health care and social service industries who experience the highest rates of injury caused by workplace violence of any industry. These employees should not have to risk their physical safety at work. Workers deserve an enforceable standard to ensure that employers are taking these risks seriously, and creating safe workplaces that their employees deserve. For these reasons, AFGE fully supports an occupational safety and health standard for health care and social service workers.”

IAM: “The extreme violence, harassment, and fear that healthcare professionals face just to go to work and care for their patients is unacceptable,” *said IAM International President Robert Martinez Jr.* “IAM Healthcare members support this critical legislation, not only for their own safety, but for the millions of Americans whose quality of care is impacted because healthcare corporations fail to implement effective violence prevention measures.”

Emergency Nurses Association: “Continued violence against emergency nurses or any health care worker is neither normal, nor acceptable, under any circumstance, yet the problem has gone unabated to the point of it becoming a crisis. Meaningful solutions to mitigate and reduce violence in the emergency department are imperative, which is why ENA has long-supported legislation such as the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service

Workers Act. The time to act is now," said 2023 ENA President Terry Foster, MSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, CCRN, TCRN, FAEN.