

Sponsor: Representative Robert C. Sprague (R-Findlay)

Co-Sponsors: Representative Antonio, Representative Kelly, Representative Kent, Representative Riedel

Introduced: December 28, 2017

Status: Referred to House Health Committee

As of 1/17/18

The Ohio Nurses Association has worked closely with Representative Sprague to introduce this legislation that would prohibit a hospital from requiring a registered nurse or license practical nurse to work overtime as a condition of continued employment.

According to numerous evidence-based research, patient and nurse safety is potentially compromised when nurses work fatigued because of lengthy shifts and understaffing. House Bill 456 will allow nurses to use their professional judgment in deciding if they can continue to provide safe patient care. With this legislation, nurses will not receive retaliation (i.e. discipline from employer or Ohio Board of Nursing, or termination by employer) when refusing additional hours beyond their regularly scheduled shift. Ohio will become the 19th state to prohibit nurse mandatory overtime with the passage of this legislation.

OVERWORKED NURSES: THE IMPACT ON OHIO PATIENTS

- Nurse fatigue negatively impacts hospital costs, and patient and employee satisfaction.
- Nurse fatigue negatively impacts job performance and patient safety.
- Studies show that increased registered nurses mean decreased medication errors, and decreased registered nurses mean increased medication errors.
- More registered nurses (who are not working overtime) reduce patient readmissions by 50% and reduce ER visits after a patient is discharged.
- Nurses who work 12 or more hours per shift report higher burnout, leading to costly nurse turnover. Patient dissatisfaction also increases when nurses work lengthy shifts.

CURRENT OHIO LAW

- ONA helped pass H.B. 346 in 2008. The law established nursing care committees who produce an annual nurse staffing plan based on evidence and staffing standards. The committees are comprised of at least 50% direct care RNs and the chief nursing officer.
 - Some hospitals comply with the current law, but there is no oversight for those who don't. Furthermore, there are no repercussions if hospitals do not follow the staffing plans.
 - Since the legislation was enacted in 2008, more patients have entered the healthcare system, creating a further strain on nurse staffing.
 - In 2017, ONA helped pass language in the state budget bill requiring hospitals submit staffing plans to the Ohio Department of Health, therefore increasing hospital transparency in relation to nurse staffing.
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