

May 2, 2021

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Assemblyman, 45th District
20750 Ventura Blvd. Suite 101
Woodland Hills, CA 91364

Dear Assemblyman Gabriel:

I am a current RN student of CSU in Stanislaus and let me just say that I am proud to be a California-bred future nurse. Truly, the state has remained in the forefront of patient advocacy in our healthcare system. I am especially appreciative of the staffing requirement laws that were passed for California healthcare facilities back in 2004, and how the state has remained one of the few that implement minimum nurse staffing requirements (Aiken, et. al., 2010). This movement continues to address an important problem our healthcare workers are faced with today- low quality of patient care because of inadequate staffing.

While this promises to be a great leap towards improving health services and easing the workload of our tired health workers, staffing continues to become a problem in many hospitals and nursing homes. I've seen this myself when I worked as a CNA for an acute care facility. CNAs were sent home, decreasing the staff level such that it violates the direct care: patient ratio rule. Through "program flexibility" waivers, administration can routinely try to cut expenses by decreasing staff and not following state-mandated nurse-to-patient ratios (SEIU, 2021). This compromises patient care to dangerous levels as less than the recommended ratio results in greater risk of falls, injury, medical errors, and unintended negligence.

With this said, I strongly support Assembly Bill 1422, the "Patients' Right to Know" that will improve the transparency when hospitals request for so-called flexibility waivers. I understand that with this bill, healthcare facilities will be required to show proof of the need to decrease staff and demonstrate that this will not compromise patient care (SEIU, 2021). Clearly, it's not enough to have staffing regulations in place; we have to make sure they are reinforced as well.

It is my hope to see that every California patient is provided with adequate and quality care. I am grateful that you share this same hope as well.

Respectfully,


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References:

Aiken, L., Sloane, D., Cimiotti, J., Clarke, S., Flynn, L., Seago, J. A., Spetz, J., Smith, H. (August 2010). *Implications of the California nurse staffing mandate for other states* 45(4):904-921. US National Library of Medicine. National Institutes of Health. <https://doi:10.1111/j.1475-6773.2010.01114.x>

SEIU. (2021, February 22). AB 1422- *Important bill to curb “program flexibility” introduced in Sacramento.* <http://www.seiu121rn.org/2021/02/22/ab-1422-important-bill-to-curb-safe-staffing-waivers-introduced-in-sacramento/>