

March 22, 2021

Proponents of mandatory nurse staffing ratios have again introduced legislation ([\*House Bill 3871\*](#)), essentially the same mandatory nurse staffing ratios proposal that was blocked in the 2019 and 2020 legislative sessions. The bill, sponsored by state Representative Fred Crespo (D-44), will be considered by the [\*House Health Care Licenses Committee\*](#) on Wednesday morning (March 24). IHA and the American Nurses Association – Illinois (ANA-IL) strongly oppose HB 3871. Both organizations strongly support bipartisan legislation to strengthen the state’s Nurse Staffing by Patient Acuity Act (Senate Bill 2153).

**ACTIONS REQUESTED:** Contact members of the House Health Care Licenses Committee and urge them to vote No or Present on House Bill 3871. To look up the members of the committee, their contact information, and the hospitals in their districts, [\*click here\*](#). (Note, not all members have hospitals.)

Submit an electronic witness slip to the committee, opposing HB3871, by [\*clicking here\*](#). When you fill out the form, be sure to check the “Opponent” circle in Section III, and the “Record of Appearance Only” box in Section IV.

If you are a constituent of a committee member (i.e., you live or work in that member’s district), you can send an email message to that member by [\*clicking here\*](#).

For background information and resources on the nurse staffing issue, go to [\*IHA’s website\*](#) (password required).

#### Suggested Talking Points

- I urge you to vote NO or Present on House Bill 3871, which would impose unnecessary and unworkable mandatory nurse staffing ratios at hospitals.
- The Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA) and the hospital community have tried to work in good faith with the ratio bill’s sponsor and supporters and offered them an alternative compromise – strengthening the existing Nurse Staffing by Patient Acuity Act – but that offer was rejected.
- Working collaboratively with the American Nurses Association-Illinois (ANA-IL), IHA and the hospital community support a bipartisan legislative proposal on strengthening the Acuity Act – Senate Bill 2153.
- The legislation backed by IHA and ANA-IL will ensure that direct care nurses have a stronger voice in the staffing process and that nurses and supervisors collaborate on determining appropriate staffing levels at hospitals, based on the conditions and care needs (acuity) of their patients.
- There is no conclusive evidence that imposing mandatory nurse staffing ratios will improve quality or patient outcomes; Illinois outperforms California – the only state in the U.S. to enact nurse staffing ratios – in several quality metrics.
- A one-size-fits-all numerical approach to staffing takes away flexibility and decision-making autonomy from the healthcare professionals at my hospital.
- The nurse leaders and direct care nurses at my LOCAL hospital – who have extensive training, experience and knowledge – should be the ones making decisions for my hospital on how best to provide high quality care to our patients 24/7/365.
- These critical decisions made every day at my hospital – minute-by-minute and hour-by-hour – are best handled at the LOCAL level.
- Nurse staffing ratios will drive up healthcare costs in Illinois by at least \$2 billion a year – for patients, families, employers and hospitals. My hospital simply cannot absorb the substantial, additional costs from nurse staffing ratios.

- Having to hire many more registered nurses to meet the ratios will lead to staffing cuts in other areas including support staff.
- Nurse staffing ratios could force my hospital to reduce or eliminate services, like behavioral health, or go on emergency bypass when we do not have enough nurses to meet the ratios, e.g., when there is a sudden influx of patients in the Emergency Department or a specific unit.
- The state faces a regional nursing shortage and will lose one-third of the nurse workforce to retirement in the next five years; Illinois does not have enough nurses to meet the ratio mandates. Staffing ratios will only exacerbate the nursing shortage.
- Please vote No or Present on House Bill 3871 or any other mandatory nurse staffing ratio proposal.

If you have any questions about this alert, please [contact IHA](#).

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