

AMERICA'S HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

January 24, 2024

The Honorable Larry Bucshon
U.S. House of Representatives
150 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Madeleine Dean
U.S. House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Bucshon and Dean:

On behalf of our nation's hospitals and health systems, we are writing in support of your legislation, the Safety from Violence for Healthcare Employees (SAVE) Act (H.R. 2584), which would provide federal protections for health care workers who are victims of violence and intimidation in the workplace.

Although our members have for many years had protocols in place designed to protect their employees and promote a safe environment for patient care, the number of violent attacks against health care workers has increased markedly in recent years. Recent studies¹ indicate that 44% of nurses have reported being subjected to physical violence and 68% have reported verbal abuse. These experiences affect the individual provider, who may suffer from both physical and psychological trauma, and they can also interfere with patient care when providers fear for their personal safety, are distracted by disruptive patients or family members, or are traumatized from prior violent interactions. These types of incidents also consume scarce hospital and health system resources, which in turn could impact the care available for other patients.

The SAVE Act would provide protections from assault for hospital workers, similar to those in the federal statute that apply to aircraft and airport workers. In addition to offering federal level protections to health care workers, we appreciate that the SAVE Act would provide grants to hospitals for programs to help reduce the incidence of violence in our care settings. These grants could be used for training hospital personnel, coordinating with state and local law enforcement, and purchasing of equipment or technology that will assist in creating a safer environment.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you to enact the SAVE Act.

Sincerely,

America's Essential Hospitals
American Hospital Association
Association of American Medical Colleges
Catholic Health Association of the United States
Children's Hospital Association
Federation of American Hospitals
National Association for Behavioral Healthcare
Premier Inc.
Vizient, Inc.

¹ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/21650799211031233>