

January 21, 2025

Dear Massachusetts State Legislator:

The Massachusetts Nurses Association, the Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association, and the Massachusetts Division of 1199SEIU write to jointly request your co-sponsorship and support of the just re-filed and updated *Act Requiring Health Care Employers to Develop and Implement Programs to Prevent Workplace Violence (HD.3502/ SD.1639)*; Rep. John Lawn / Sen. Joan Lovely.

Healthcare facility workers continue to suffer violent assaults and other incidents of workplace violence at least five times more often than the average private sector worker.ⁱ Meanwhile, employee surveys show troubling increases in violence across Massachusetts' hospitals, with a physical assault, verbal abuse or serious threat now occurring nearly twice every hour.ⁱⁱ Even with many incidents never reported, many thousands suffer violent injuries annually. Workforce shortages and strains, unstandardized security prevention/planning, and a lack of appropriate consequences all contribute to these unacceptably dangerous working conditions.


An Act Requiring Health Care Employers to Develop and Implement Programs to Prevent Workplace Violence is comprehensive policy reform designed to reduce violence at hospital facilities by:

- Requiring all Massachusetts hospitals develop a facility specific risk assessment and then use that assessment to implement a comprehensive program to reduce the risk of workplace violence.
- Engaging the workforce in developing the assessment/program that includes worker training, and with a formal written violence prevention plan available upon request to all employees/labor organizations.
- Establishing strong enforcement through DPH licensing, regular reporting, and job protections for affected workers that include additional paid leave for assaulted workers.

We're pleased to report that all three of our organizations have worked diligently and collaboratively to re-draft this now jointly supported bill that we hope to advance early in the 2025-2026 legislative session. As jointly re-drafted and as submitted by our lead sponsors, this bill offers a series of appropriately strong solutions to very real problems facing the healthcare workforce.

Thank you for your time and attention. We respectfully ask for your co-sponsorship and support of this critical legislation, and we look forward to our continued work together to advance this bill.

Sincerely,



Julie Pinkham
Executive Director
MA Nurses Association



Steve Walsh
President & CEO
MA Health & Hospital Assoc.



Tim Foley
Executive Vice President
1199SEIU – Massachusetts

ⁱ See: <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-16-11> & [Violence And The US Health Care Sector: Burden And Response - PubMed](#)

ⁱⁱ See: [Workplace Violence in Healthcare: A Call to Protect the Workforce - MHHA](#) & [Workplace Violence - MNA](#)