

February 26, 2023

Dear House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

How would you feel if your mom needed care and had to wait 5 hours in the emergency room and then it took hours longer to get the x-rays and receive care?

How would you feel if you were in the hospital and you needed help getting to the bathroom but no one came and so you wet the bed?

How would you feel if a loved one got hurt or died in the hospital because of a mistake that could have been easily prevented?

Things like that are happening every day. As a nurse, I live in constant fear that I'll make a terrible mistake because I had too many patients that I was rushing to see, or because I'm so tired that I mess up.

I don't remember the last time we had enough staff on our unit. If there are enough nurses, they take away our CNAs. If there are enough CNAs, there's a nurse or two or even three missing. I almost never have time to sit with my patients and give them my full attention. It's just pushing meds and changing dressing and rush rush rush.

This isn't the kind of care anyone wants or deserves. We need help. Some people say that I shouldn't get my hopes up because the legislature will listen to CEOs and not nurses, but I'm writing this anyway because I have to hope. Please hear us. If not for nurses and health care workers, for the patients who need more from us.

I understand that staffing laws won't solve all the problems overnight, but they will help us get on the right track. Right now the hospitals just shrug their shoulders and ignore us. Please don't let them do that anymore.

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