

Submitter: Emily Cohen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4074

Emily Cohen

February 10, 2026

RE: Testimony in Opposition to HB 4074

To the House Health Care Committee:

I am writing to you today to express my opposition to HB 4074. As a bedside ICU nurse, I have seen firsthand how positively the current staffing law has changed our patient care and work environment. The proposed changes would effectively gut the current progress that has been made under this staffing law. When I started as a nurse during the COVID pandemic, we were consistently short staffed. The norm was for nurses to skip their breaks or to “buddy break” requiring a single nurse to cover for 4 critical ICU patients. These patients are on life sustaining medications that if not watched carefully could lead to death or serious harm. Many of them are on ventilators or other medical devices to keep them alive. Requiring a nurse to manage 4 of these patients at once was never ideal, often unsafe, and created many opportunities for mistakes to occur. Under the current staffing law, no ICU nurse can watch more than 2 patients, requiring our hospital to staff with a break nurse. I truly believe that the only reason that hospitals are in compliance with this is because of the penalties they will face if they do not comply under the current law. This bill as proposed would severely weaken the current requirements, allowing hospitals to continue prioritizing profits over patients and staff to the absolute minimum possible. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and I urge you to join me in opposing the bill.

Emily Cohen