

Submitter:

Erica Swartz

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Health Care

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4074

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Diehl and Nelson, and Committee members. My name is Erica Swartz, I am a registered nurse with 17 years of experiencing (including being on the staffing committee at my hospital for 6 years) and I am speaking in strong opposition to House Bill 4074.

This bill would allow hospitals to self-attest that they complied with the nurse staffing law — meaning they just say they complied and offer not a single ounce of proof. No proof.

No serious safety system in healthcare relies on the honor system. None. Accrediting and investigative agencies do not accept honor system reports. Considering that changes to the monetary penalties that are also being introduced here will push hospitals to under staff, it is counter to the intent of the law to introduce the element of self-attestation. It is also an affront to those engaged in the work.

A nurse's practice is monitored and evaluated.. Nurses are audited. Nurses are disciplined. Nurses lose licenses for errors. Yet this bill says hospitals can simply check a box and move on. It rubber stamps performative participation.

Self-attestation does not equal meaningful oversight — it is permission to lie without consequence. The current law made important strides in addressing power differentials in health care- meaning administrators and direct care nurses have an equal seat at the table. This bill would erode that and offer back a stronger hand in decision making to administrators alone. It erases accountability and guarantees that unsafe staffing continues behind closed doors.

This provision guts enforcement and insults the intelligence of every nurse who knows what actually happens in caring for patients.. Checking a box is easy, coming to the table to do meaningful work is not.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 4074.