

To: House Health Policy Committee and Legislators,

My name is Chuck Sherwin, I have been a registered nurse for over 35 years. I became a nurse because I wanted to care for the injured and ill and make a difference in their lives. My career has spanned many roles, I've been a staff nurse working in Medical Surgical Units, Intensive Care Units, and Emergency Departments. I have been in collective bargaining and non-bargaining positions, I have been in various roles as a nurse leader and administrative leader. Currently I serve as the president of MyMichigan Medical Center Midland. As a hospital leader, all I strive for is to make sure that our patients are receiving the care they need, and the experts who should be the ones making staffing decisions are my team members, not the state. I'm writing to express my opposition toward House Bills 4550-4552 and Senate Bills 334-336. If this legislation passes, my hospital will have to reduce operations and face catastrophic consequences.

I had the opportunity to attend the Sept. 13 during the Hospitals for Patient Access Advocacy Day. I appreciated our conversation and the time you gave to hear my concerns regarding House Bills 4550-4552 and Senate Bills 334-336. Those bills, which mandate one-size-fits-all nurse staffing ratios, would harm access to healthcare services in our community. Staffing decisions should be made by nurses and hospital leaders at the clinical level and should not be limited to statewide legislative mandated ratios. As a hospital leader, I have seen firsthand the effects of the widespread nursing shortage and know that instead of a one-size-fits-all staffing mandate, we need long-term solutions that will strengthen Michigan's nursing workforce for decades to come.

I would be remiss if I didn't share that I have continued concerns about an approach to nursing that isn't reflective of the unique makeup of our region. Michigan is facing a significant challenge in filling approximately 8,500 job openings for nurses right now, and instituting a one-size-fits-all mandate requiring hospitals to hire more nurses who do not exist will have extremely detrimental effects on the services we are able to provide to patients. It will lead to prolonged waiting times, risks the closure 5,100 available hospital beds around the state, and hinders the ability of our care teams to respond to crises. I am focused on long-term solutions to hire and retain nurses; staffing ratios do not create more nurses nor solve staffing shortages.

I respectfully request you withdraw your support for House Bills 4550-4552 and Senate Bills 334-336 and explore alternative solutions that will better address the nursing shortages in our state while preserving the quality and accessibility of healthcare services for our residents.

Sincerely,

Chuck Sherwin, MS, BSN, RN, FACHE
President
MyMichigan Medical Center Midland