



January 23, 2021

Senate State Administration Committee:

My name is Vicky Byrd, MSN, RN. I am a Montana Registered Nurse of 32 years and the CEO of the Montana Nurses Association (MNA). MNA is the recognized leader and advocate for the professional nurse in Montana. MNA promotes professional development, nursing practice, standards, and education; represents professional nurses; and provides nursing leadership in promoting high quality healthcare, safety, and overall public health.

**MNA Opposes Senator Regier's SB 89 for the following reasons:**

Senator Regier's SB 89 is unnecessary and unconstitutional, moreover, is an attack on all professional nurses' ability to organize and advocate for their fellow nurses, safe working conditions, and their patients. The bill is bad for collective bargaining compromises MNA as a professional nurses' union and professional nurses' association. This bill is a direct attack on Mary Munger's, RN, "Blue Eyed Nurses" Bill from 1967 that, for over 50 years, has given professional nurses in Montana the right to collectively bargain. MNA members agree and support that working people and professions should have the freedom to join together if they so choose to.

What this SB 89 takes away from the professional nurse:

- 1) The professional nurses' freedom to collaboratively and professionally negotiate with their employers.
- 2) The professional nurses' choice regarding what they can and cannot do with their paychecks.
- 3) The professional nurses' freedom to collectively advocate and negotiate for quality public services, workplace safety, and safe, quality patient care.

Again, why does the Montana Legislature or Senator Regier care where professional nurses spend their money? Telling nurses **how** to spend their money? Why would this legislature want to weaken the voice of nurses, the most trusted profession, that throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, along with other essential public and private sector workers, have risked and continue to risk their lives, and those of their families, every day to care for you and your communities? Why would this legislature and Senator Regier want to take away the nurses collective voice and advocacy that impacts patients every day. It is with these questions above, MNA strongly opposes SB 89.

Vicky Byrd, MSN, RN CEO  
vicky@mtnurses.org  
Cell/text 406-459-2915

📍 20 Old Montana State Highway ~ Clancy, MT 59634  
☎ 406-442-6710 📠 406-442-1841 🌐 [www.mtnurses.org](http://www.mtnurses.org)