



Montana Nurses Association Introduces Safe Staffing Legislation

Helena, MT- Today, the Montana Nurses Association (MNA) secured the introduction of HB 568, to establish Safe Nursing Standards. Registered Nurses (RNs) around the state are calling on Montana legislators to pass safe staffing standards. HB 568 is sponsored by Representative Mary Caferro, HD80, whose mother and daughters are all Registered Nurses.

RNs are on the frontlines of healthcare, including the COVID pandemic, providing care in what has become the most challenging working conditions ever felt in Montana. Nurses deserve our support and HB 568 would set **minimum** nurse to patient staffing requirements and provide best practices for safe nurse staffing. Currently, no standards or ratios exist to establish minimum safe staffing levels at hospitals, which can put patients at risk, moreover, often forces nurses to care for too many patients, which compromises outcomes.

“Montana nurses continue to work very long hours, providing the vital care to patients in our communities, and more often than not, do it understaffed. Their jobs are critical to provide high quality patient care and keeping those patients safe, however, nurses remain stretched too thin, caring for too many patients, with not enough support” stated Vicky Byrd, MSN, RN, Montana Nurses Association, CEO. *“We are asking the MT Legislators to ensure our nurses have the ability to provide the best patient care by guaranteeing that hospitals are staffed adequately, create vital protections for nurses, improve patient care and safety, and ensure a dignified, inclusive, workplace.”*

[Studies have shown](#) (link embedded) that higher nurse-to-patient ratios are associated with lower mortality and morbidity rates. MNA’s bill directs hospitals to develop and implement nurse staffing plans that ensure nurses are at the table to increase quality care and patient safety.

“This is a great moment and opportunity, for our elected leaders to improve health care for all Montanans” said Mary Caferro about HB 568.

