

Good evening, Chair McEwen and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about the dire needs we have in our hospitals. My name is Kelly Hallow and I've been a registered nurse since 2020 with 10 years of healthcare experience prior to nursing.

In the spring of 2022, I was elected as a steward to the emergency room and I started a new position as a nurse in the emergency room. Due to deep concerns about patient care in the ED, I would fill out MNA's concern for safe staffing forms regularly.

In July of 2022, my manager approached me in area public area and confronted me about my unsafe staffing reports. She told me that 2 nurses at night for the whole emergency room was appropriate staffing and that I should not fill out any more reports. At one point when she confronted me publicly, she yelled at me and was interrupted by another nurse who removed me from the situation.

Knowing there needed to be change, I continued to fill out unsafe staffing reports when I had concerns. This manager continued to bully and harass me. She encouraged staff to complain about me, fished for negative information about me from others, complained to my coworkers about me, and held multiple investigatory meetings about complaints from patients and staff, none of which were substantiated.

Numerous nurses have left the emergency room where I work due to bullying, often centered around staffing concerns. We are often overrun with boarding patients, sometimes waiting days for a bed.

Those patients do not receive the care they deserve or need because we do not have enough staff to handle the constant flow of emergency room patients AND boarding patients. Nurses who bring these issues to the management face bullying in many different forms. They lose out on opportunities to earn more money and see their schedules changed without reason. They are harassed by management. So many nurses have left, we have consistently had a large percentage of traveling nurses on our units since 2021.

We need your intervention and support. Please pass SF 1561 the Keeping Nurses at the Bedside Act.