



February 28, 2023

Professional Distinction

Personal Dignity

Patient Advocacy

Senator Jennifer McEwen, Chair
Minnesota Senate Committee on Labor
Minnesota State Senate
95 University Ave W.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Chair McEwen and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor,

With over 22,000 members, the Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA) is the leading organization representing professional nursing across Minnesota. As leaders in labor and healthcare, we are a voice for hospital nurses statewide on issues related to the health and well-being of the public.

One of healthcare workers primary concerns is to ensure quality care for patients. However, without the proper working conditions, it can become challenging to be able to provide that quality care. Rules and guidance that provide for fair wages, more consistent working hours, and other worker protections are vitally needed in our state in order to ensure that healthcare workers in nursing homes are able to provide the quality care that they want to deliver.

In addition to protecting patients and workers, the establishment of new parameters, such as those included in S.F. 1621, will also help employers who are looking to attract workers in their facilities. The wages earned by most workers in the nursing home industry are far below the wages needed to sustain one's family, let alone oneself, and this bill will help nursing home workers get the wage they deserve for the care they are entrusted to provide. This legislation provides for flexibility and much-needed responsiveness to market conditions, wage rates, and changes to federal regulations presently missing from state statutes – which has greatly contributed to the low wages, worker safety issues, and other issues related to working conditions currently experienced by most nursing home workers.

Poor working conditions, unfair scheduling practices, low wages, and other business practices in the healthcare industry directly contribute to the industry's low worker retention rates. These provisions included in S.F. 1621 will not only protect patients and workers, but they will also help with retention issues in the nursing home industry. S.F. 1621 would be a significant step forward in growing our nursing home workforce.

We hope that members of the committee will support this vital legislation.

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