



March 2023

Senator Jennifer McEwen  
Minnesota State Senate  
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3217  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair McEwen and Labor Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on S.F. 1561 (Sen. Murphy) and H.F. 1700 (Rep. Feist), otherwise known as "The Keeping Nurses at the Bedside Act". While Mayo Clinic supports certain provisions in the bill, we have significant concerns with others.

The guiding principle of Mayo Clinic is that the needs of the patient come first. Serving the needs of our patients also means supporting our staff. Perhaps the greatest challenge facing health care workers is that there are not enough of them. Health care faces a huge and growing workforce shortage, including but not limited to nursing. Several factors are contributing to the shortage: demographic changes driving patient needs, an aging workforce, burnout and increasing violence against health care workers. We appreciate that S.F. 1561 and H.F. 1700 address some of these issues through ongoing appropriations to support mental health resources for health care workers and loan forgiveness for nurses. Mayo Clinic has also put forward its own proposal in conjunction with a broad coalition of supporters to establish competitive grants through the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to provide facilities improvements and trainings to improve staff safety.

Like many others, Mayo Clinic shares the goal of retaining nurses but has concerns with the proposed approach, specifically the creation of committees to regulate staffing. Staffing appropriately is time-sensitive and patient-specific. A complex committee structure that sets staffing ratios is not well aligned to meet the needs of staff or patients. It is also duplicative of current paths for nurses to provide input on staffing. Most importantly, it fails to solve the real problem—to retain and support our nurses, we need more nurses, not more committees.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katherine L. Johansen".

Kate Johansen, J.D.  
Vice Chair, External Engagement  
Mayo Clinic

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nikki Vilendrer".

Nikki Vilendrer, M.P.P.  
Manager, External Engagement  
Mayo Clinic