March 13, 2023

Committee on Labor
Minnesota Senate
SF 1561

Dear Committee Members,

The Minnesota Business Partnership is a membership organization comprised of top business leaders from Minnesota's largest employers, employing almost half a million workers across the state. I write to express some of our concerns about Senate File 1561, which would establish nurse staffing ratios at hospitals.

Ensuring the safety and well-being of patients is the top priority for Minnesota hospitals. Hospitals are already short-staffed and fewer individuals are training to enter the health care provider workforce. Prohibiting staffing flexibility that hospitals have relied on throughout the pandemic will leave little option but to reduce services or turn away patients. Instead, we should be supporting team-based care staffing models that allow staffing decisions to be made at local hospitals based on patient needs and the judgment of experienced nursing staff, especially as hospitals face critical staffing shortages.

Beyond the importance our hospitals place on care and wellbeing for their patients, Minnesota currently has a transparent process for public reporting of hospital staffing. Minnesota consistently ranks as one of the top states in the nation for patient care, and this bill does little to improve upon that while creating additional layers of hospital staff management.

Our members support affordable and accessible health care and have the utmost respect for nurses. We understand the burden placed on nurses and other health care providers during the pandemic, and we want to thank Senator Murphy for including the appropriation for improving mental health of health care workers in this bill.

Our shared goal is for patients to have access to the highest quality of care possible. We look forward to working together to find solutions that help solve our health care workforce shortage without impacting the quality and availability of patient care.

Sincerely,

Abby Loesch

Health Policy Director
Minnesota Business Partnership