



## **The Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act (H.R. 2663 and S. 1176)**

The Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses (AMSUN) is the only specialty nursing organization dedicated to the practice of medical-surgical nursing. AMSUN and its more than 10,000 members represent nurses who have advanced organizational, prioritization, assessment, and communication skills and are leaders in coordinating care among interprofessional health care teams. Medical-surgical nursing is practiced in several settings across the health care industry, including hospitals, outpatient settings, in homes, via telemedicine and other non-traditional settings.

AMSUN is concerned by the alarming rise of workplace violence against our nation's nurses and health care professionals and believe that additional federal guardrails are needed to address this growing crisis. Nurses and health care practitioners are among the professions with the highest rates of workplace violence. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, health care and social service workers accounted for 76% of all nonfatal injuries from workplace violence in 2020. AMSUN supports the *Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act* (H.R. 2663 and S. 1176) to ensure that health care workers have the basic protections and safety standards they need and deserve.

### **The Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act**

The *Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act* requires the Department of Labor (DOL) to address workplace violence in the health care and social service sectors and issue an occupational safety and health standard that requires certain employers to take actions to protect workers from workplace violence. The bipartisan legislation was introduced by Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Representative Joe Courtney (D-CT-02) on April 18, 2023. The legislation would protect health care workers by doing the following:

- Requiring the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to issue a violence prevention standard that requires certain health care and social service employers to develop and implement a violence prevention plan that specifically and comprehensively addresses the conditions and hazards of each workplace or unit.
- Requiring employers to investigate any incident of workplace violence, risk, or hazard and provide training and education to employees who may have been impacted.
- Defining workplace violence as “the threat, or use of, physical force against an employee that results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury, psychological trauma, or stress” and defining the threat of violence as “fear for one’s safety because there is a reasonable possibility an individual might be physically injured.”

**Recommendation:** AMSN urges Members of Congress to cosponsor the *Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act* (H.R. 2663 and S. 1176).