



Maryland
Hospital Association

July 26, 2024

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Glenn F. Ivey
1529 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Christopher Van Hollen
730 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
1705 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Andy Harris
1536 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Trone
2404 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dutch Ruppersberger
2206 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kweisi Mfume
2263 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Sarbanes
2370 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jamie Raskin
2242 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Maryland Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems and their over 109,500 employees, we request your support for the Safety from Violence for Healthcare Employees (SAVE) Act (H.R. 2584/S. 2768). The SAVE Act would establish a new criminal penalty for knowingly assaulting or intimidating hospital personnel in the pursuit of their official duties. The legislation would also provide grants for hospitals to help reduce incidences of violence.

MHA has raised awareness about this issue and advocated for state legislative solutions including the successful passage of legislation that allows an employer to petition for a peace order on behalf of their employee. This year MHA successfully advocated for a state-funded public awareness campaign to address incivility experienced daily in Maryland hospitals.

Hospitals invest time and resources into protecting patients, staff members, and visitors:

- Implementing policy changes
- Purchasing new equipment including panic buttons, cameras, etc.

- Capital improvements to establish clear lines of sight and special accommodations for behavioral health patients
- Hiring special police officers
- Installing metal detectors
- Requiring training for staff
- Forming behavioral health emergency response teams

Despite the field's ongoing advocacy for legislative and policy change, no impactful solutions have been implemented. And now, Maryland hospitals have reached a breaking point.

In every conversation about how to grow the health care workforce, hospital leaders express concerns about the frequency and severity of violence perpetrated against their employees. As the state continues to recover the workforce lost during the pandemic, the hospital field remains concerned about the impact of workplace violence on recruitment and retention.

This is an issue that occurs in every hospital—no matter their size or location—across our state and nationwide.

MHA piloted a data collection effort on the number of incidences and the policy changes and investments Maryland hospitals have made to address this issue. We are happy to provide the preliminary results. Additionally, based on the recommendations from MHA's Task Force on Maryland's Future Health Workforce, we and our member hospitals are exploring how to collect statewide data to show the frequency and severity of incidences of workplace violence. While individual hospitals are collecting data, it is not available on a statewide basis.

This problem requires a federal solution. We ask that you support the SAVE Act to help Maryland hospitals keep patients, team members, and visitors safe and meet the needs of their communities.

We are happy to share more about the impact of violence and how hospitals are working to address it. Please contact Natasha Mehu, vice president of government affairs and policy, at nmehu@mhaonline.org with any questions.

Thank you again for your time and consideration of this critical federal legislation that will positively impact Maryland residents.

Sincerely,



Melony G. Griffith
President & CEO