

Senate Health & Human Services

03/26/2025 Upon Adjournment

SB25-166 Health-Care Workplace Violence Incentive Payments

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Margaret Bishop For themselves	<p data-bbox="565 506 1438 575">Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the committee, for taking the time to review this testimony.</p> <p data-bbox="565 663 1466 926">My name is Margaret Bishop. I am a registered nurse and member of the Colorado Nurses Association though I am representing myself in this testimony in support of SB25-166, Health-Care Workplace Violence Incentive Payments. I have been practicing as a registered nurse for less than a decade, and in that time, I have experienced verbal, physical, and sexual violence from patients and families as well as verbal harassment and bullying as a new graduate from peers, nursing leaders, and providers.</p> <p data-bbox="565 1014 1458 1465">In addition to anxiety stemming from the experience-based assumption that my peers and I would face significant adversity every time we stepped into the workplace, I recall that lack of effective support from leadership was the most discouraging factor. Reporting never crossed my mind as an option, and I don't believe that I have ever formally submitted a report of workplace violence. Aside from lack of knowledge of any reporting processes, I've been wary that leadership would not or could not respond effectively and that some level of retaliation could be expected if pursuing a report of lateral violence by colleagues or superiors. Some studies show that 30% of new graduate nurses leave their positions within the first year and 57% within the second citing burnout, stress, and lack of support. We cannot afford for this to continue.</p> <p data-bbox="565 1554 1438 1854">Our collective response to this issue is crucial. Many perpetrators of violence in healthcare settings are not capable of being reasoned with or deterred. Healthcare settings can be extremely stressful or triggering of intense trauma responses. When this happens, the amygdala sets into motion fight, flight, or freeze responses. As such, logical thinking, self-regulation, and empathy are not within the individual's reach. This can happen to anyone at any time and must cease to be viewed as a problem of 'us versus them.' Arrests and punitive action will not solve this.</p>

	<p>We are in a position, however, to gather and utilize data to inform prevention measures that can be catered to different settings and populations. It is for this reason that I encourage you to vote in support of SB25-166. The healthcare workforce needs support, meaningful metrics and incentives to prevent violence upon staff so that we may provide timely, high-quality, and evidence-based care to our communities.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
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