



JNESO
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LEADING HEALTHCARE UNION TESTIFIES THAT UNSAFE STAFFING IN NEW JERSEY HOSPITALS PUT PATIENTS' LIVES AT RISK

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Trenton – On Monday, February 9th, JNESO District Council 1 President Elfrieda Johnson testified before the Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee in support of Senate bill 1183, which would mandate safe registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratios in hospitals throughout the state. Johnson urged the Committee to update the ten year old legislation and pointed to the growing body of research as well as her own experiences to illustrate the critical impact that unsafe staffing ratios can have on patient care.

“The research is clear,” Johnson testified. “Time and time again studies have demonstrated that there is a direct link between unsafe registered nurse staffing levels and increased patient complications, poor outcomes, high readmission rates, and even mortality,” she continued. “In fact, for every additional patient added to a nurse’s workload, the likelihood of an in-patient death within 30 days of admission increases by seven percent.” Currently, some hospitals meet or come close to meeting the ratios recommended at today’s hearing, while others do not. Johnson argued that patients and their loved ones should expect parity across the state.

“Every person in the state of New Jersey should be able to walk into a hospital and expect the same standards of care regardless of where they live or what hospital they visit,” Johnson said. “Let’s make that a reality.”

JNESO has long advocated for safe staffing legislation, and recently bargained staffing ratios into their contract at St. Michael’s Medical Center in Newark. The union has argued that obtaining safe levels of nurse staffing should not be done piecemeal, but should be uniform throughout the state.

“Patients deserve to enter a hospital in the State of New Jersey without having to wonder if they will suffer preventable complications because there were not enough nurses to provide the care they need,” said Johnson. “We can no longer accept what research and experience have proven is a dangerous environment for New Jersey’s patients and healthcare workers. We need safe staffing ratios, and we need them now.”

Johnson has practiced nursing for 33 years, and currently works at St. Michael’s Medical Center in Newark. She also serves as the President of the Board of Directors for JNESO District Council 1, a professional healthcare union representing 5,000 nurses and other healthcare workers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. A complete copy of Johnson’s testimony is attached.

JNESO District Council 1 is a professional healthcare union representing over 5,000 healthcare professionals in New Jersey and Pennsylvania and is an affiliate of the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE). Learn more at: www.jneso.org.

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