



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NURSES TO TESTIFY TODAY IN SUPPORT OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE LEGISLATION

Nurses cannot practice safely if they are not safe.

MADISON, WI, September 2019 ---According to the American Nurses Association one in four nurses are assaulted at work. Data from the Wisconsin Nurses Association show that there is an increase in workplace violence against nurses in Wisconsin. Workplace violence includes physical, verbal and sexual assault. Workplace violence against nurses can come from patients, family members and/or visitors.

*"Nurses cannot practice safely if they are not safe," stated **Gina Dennik-Champion, CEO of the Wisconsin Nurses Association.** "Passage of SB-163 \ AB-175 is an important part of the larger campaign of public education and empowering nurses to report and hopefully avoid life threatening situations."*

Currently, a perpetrator who causes battery to an emergency room nurse and others can be criminally charged with a Class H Felony. A Class H felony carries with it six years of incarceration and/or a fine of \$10,000. WNA would like this same criminal penalty standard be applied to any work setting that employs Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses and other staff that a nurse supervises.

In response to this increase in workplace violence against nurses, Senator Dale Kooyenga and State Representative Gae Magnafici have authored SB 163 and AB 175. These bills call for the Class H Felony penalty. A Public Hearing of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety will take place today, September 17 and the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety tomorrow, September 18.

The Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA) is the premier organization representing the interests of Wisconsin's 90,000 registered nurses. WNA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting a safe and ethical work environment, bolstering the health and wellness of nurses, and advocating on health care issues that affect nurses and the public. WNA is at the forefront of improving the quality of health care for all.

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