**Healthcare Workers in [INSERT STATE] Applaud House Passage**

**of the Workplace Violence Prevention for**

**Health Care and Social Service Workers Act; Urge Senate Support**

[INSERT DATELINE]—Nurses and healthcare workers in [insert affiliate state] are one step closer to gaining desperately needed protections to make their workplaces safer, a critical step to providing better care for their patients.

The U.S. House of Representatives recently passed the Workplace Violence Prevention in Healthcare and Social Services Act *(H.R.1309)*, which puts in place meaningful, enforceable protections for healthcare and social service workers like requiring employers to develop violence prevention plans to mitigate risk factors in healthcare facilities and creating whistleblower protections for so workers don’t fear retaliation for speaking out against violence in the workplace. The bipartisan legislation now moves onto the U.S. Senate, where its fate is less certain.

Nurses, health techs and other professionals across [STATE], as members of [LOCAL] and affiliates of the American Federation of Teachers, the second largest nurses’ union in the country, are mobilizing on behalf of the bill.

Here in [insert location], [local] represents more than [insert local number] nurses and health professionals in a variety of settings, stories of nurses and social workers being kicked, stabbed and choked, as well as suffering broken bones and traumatic injuries, are all too common. According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, frontline healthcare providers are five times more likely to be assaulted at work than the rest of the labor force.

This landmark legislation can change that by putting the onus of employee safety on the employer – where it belongs. It sends a strong message that violence-on-the-job is not inevitable or acceptable for the millions of healthcare professionals who provide care in our communities, but who increasingly find themselves subject to workplace attacks.

American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten said, “Every single working person in this country should have the right to a safe and welcoming workplace, no matter what job they do. If successful, this legislation means, finally, the people who have devoted their careers to looking after the aging, the sick, and the injured can have specific protections at work."

[LOCAL QUOTE]: "This federal legislation makes clear that nurse and healthcare working conditions are also patient healing and recovery conditions. It’s in all of our best interests to make our hospitals and healthcare facilities safer, better places to work," said [insert local affiliate leader].

"No one should go to work with a pit in their stomach feeling terrified of injury or harm, yet too many of our members have resigned themselves to believing that violence-on-the-job is simply an inevitable reality of their field."

Commenting on the bill's prospects in the Senate, Weingarten said, "House passage is a first step, but a critical one. Government is at its best when it serves people and ideals -- not agendas. And that is precisely what this legislation does— it takes a proactive approach to fix a massive hole in our healthcare system that has been neglected too long; and puts policies in place that will make violence in healthcare settings the exception, not the rule. On behalf of AFT's 1.7 million members, I strongly urge our U.S. Senators to recognize that workplace safety is not a partisan issue, but rather a human right."

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