



MICHIGAN NURSES ASSOCIATION

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Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015

Dear esteemed members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of registered nurses taking care of patients in hospitals all across our state, we wish to respectfully express our opposition to Senate Bill 442.

Allowing firearms in Michigan hospitals would be extremely dangerous for the following reasons:

- When people are in the hospital, especially emergency rooms, emotions can run very high. The stress, trauma and uncertainty of an illness or injury can cause patients and family members to erupt into violence. Verbal and physical assaults happen in hospitals far too frequently. The thought of **distraught patients or visitors escalating these situations into gunfire**, putting everyone in the hospital at risk, is terrifying. The best policy is to keep guns from being an option altogether.
- Even with the best of intentions and care, **gun accidents happen**. Hospitals are full of sensitive equipment that nurses and other healthcare professionals use to keep patients of all ages stable and, in some cases, keep them alive altogether. It is not hyperbole to say that a stray bullet that damages oxygen tanks, ventilators and various electronic devices may literally kill a patient. Let's not take that risk.
- Just the sight of a gun could create **harmful panic and chaos in a hospital**. Even a concealed weapon may accidentally become visible and bring medical treatment to a halt throughout the hospital as workers scramble to protect their patients and authorities sort out the situation. Life-sustaining treatment could be stopped or delayed while the area is cleared. In many cases, relocating patients (such as those on ventilators) during this time is not even an option. A distraction like this could jeopardize the health and safety of our loved ones who are supposed to be in a safe place of healing.

Thank you for your time and your careful examination of this public policy issue. Please feel free to contact me at any time if I can be of assistance or answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Dawn Kettinger

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