

S 1063

Nurse Staffing Standards for Hospital Patient Safety and Quality Care Act of 2017

Congress: 115 (2017–2019, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Health

Introduced: May 4, 2017

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. (May 4, 2017)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/1063>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Brown, Sherrod [D-OH]

Party: Democratic • **State:** OH • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (4 total)

| Cosponsor | Party / State | Role | Date Joined |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA] | D · MA | | Sep 18, 2017 |
| Sen. Baldwin, Tammy [D-WI] | D · WI | | Nov 8, 2017 |
| Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT] | I · VT | | Dec 19, 2017 |
| Sen. Harris, Kamala D. [D-CA] | D · CA | | Nov 15, 2018 |

Committee Activity

| Committee | Chamber | Activity | Date |
|--|---------|-------------|-------------|
| Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee | Senate | Referred To | May 4, 2017 |

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Health

Related Bills

| Bill | Relationship | Last Action |
|-------------|----------------|--|
| 115 HR 2392 | Identical bill | May 18, 2017: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health. |

Nurse Staffing Standards for Patient Safety and Quality Care Act of 2017

This bill amends the Public Health Service Act to require hospitals to implement and submit to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) a staffing plan that complies with specified minimum nurse-to-patient ratios by unit. Hospitals must post a notice regarding nurse-to-patient ratios in each unit and maintain records of actual ratios for each shift in each unit.

HHS must adjust Medicare payments to hospitals to cover additional costs incurred in providing services to Medicare beneficiaries that are attributable to compliance with these ratios.

The bill states that nurses have a duty and a right to act based on their professional judgment and provide care in the exclusive interests of patients. Nurses may object to, or refuse to participate in, an assignment if it would violate minimum ratios or if they are not prepared by education or experience to fulfill the assignment without compromising the safety of a patient or jeopardizing their nurse's license. Hospitals may not: (1) take specified actions against a nurse based on the nurse's refusal to accept an assignment for such a reason; or (2) discriminate against individuals for good faith complaints relating to the care, services, or conditions of the hospital or related facilities. HHS must publish the names of hospitals penalized for violating the requirements in this bill.

The bill adds stipends to the nurse workforce loan repayment and scholarship program. The nurse retention grant program is expanded to authorize programs to implement nurse preceptorship and mentorship projects.

Actions Timeline

- **May 4, 2017:** Introduced in Senate
- **May 4, 2017:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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