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Caregivers Praise Safe Patient Care Legislation Codified into Law

National. state and local union leaders applaud Governor Lamont's signature into law provisions of "An Act Concerning Adequate and Safe Health Care Staffing" included in biennial state budget.

Hartford - Bedside caregivers today hailed Governor Ned Lamont's signature into law of a state budget package that includes legislation addressing the care crisis in Connecticut's hospitals and health facilities. The statutory language will help ensure nurses and health professionals have a stronger voice in establishing their facilities' staffing plans and remove mandatory overtime language from union contracts. Both provisions have for decades been a top priority for union activists, workplace safety watchdogs and patient care advocates at the state and national levels.

"This year, Connecticut caregivers and their unions called a 'Code Red' - describing how terrible staffing conditions had become for patients and health care workers alike. Lawmakers and Gov. Lamont heard us. This budget sides with the dedicated workers sounding the alarm, not the corporations that have eroded protections in the name of record revenue. We've said over and over again that these problems are fixable, but that employers won't fix it themselves: today the governor decided it was time, finally, to help the helpers," said national American Federation of Teachers (AFT) President Randi Weingarten.

"Our union members have been advocating safe patient limits for years; adoption of these protections into law make that goal achievable," said AFT Connecticut Vice President John Brady, RN. "We hear a lot about a staffing shortage in healthcare. This is simply untrue. This care crisis is a direct result of the conditions bedside caregivers face. The only way to ease it is by improving those conditions, and the new state budget empowers nurses and health professionals to do exactly that," added Brady.

"The safe patient care provisions in the state budget will help recruit and retain bedside caregivers," said Sherri Dayton, RN, President of the Backus Federation of Nurses. "By empowering hands-on healers to help set care standards and removing mandatory overtime language from union contracts, our patients can expect the level of care they deserve. The governor's signature provides vital tools that every health professional needs in their toolbelt," added Dayton, a registered nurse at the Plainfield emergency care center.

The language adopted in the 2023-24 state budget originated in S.B. 1067, "*An Act Concerning Adequate and Safe Health Care Staffing*," legislation that garnered bi-partisan support. Connecticut's major nursing workforce organizations joined members of AFT Connecticut-affiliated unions in advocating for its passage before adjournment of the 2023 legislative session.

Nationwide, AFT represents 1.7 million pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; nurses and healthcare workers; and early childhood educators. For more information, visit aft.org.

AFT Connecticut, the largest labor organization of acute care health professionals in the state, represents approximately 7,500 providers, nurses, technical and skilled service professionals in 30 local unions. For more information, visit aftct.org or follow the labor federation on Twitter at [@AFTCT](https://twitter.com/AFTCT), on Facebook at [@aftct](https://www.facebook.com/aftct), and on Instagram at [@aftconnecticut](https://www.instagram.com/aftconnecticut).

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Links -

[June 6, 2023 AFT Connecticut Instagram Post with Safe Patient Limits Law Passage Announcement](#)

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