



April 2, 2015

MA Health Policy Commission

50 Milk Street, 8th floor

Boston, MA 02109

To the Health Policy Commission:

Representing more than 50,000 healthcare workers throughout Massachusetts and nearly 400,000 workers across six states, 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East is the largest and fastest-growing healthcare union in America. Our mission is to achieve affordable, high quality healthcare for all. 1199SEIU is part of the 2.1 million-member Service Employees International Union.

1199-UHE is testifying today in support of 958 CMR 8.0 – Registered Nurse-to-Patient Ratio in Intensive Care Units in Acute Hospitals.

Speaking on behalf of our nursing membership, and the rest of the key members of the health care team, we support the effort to provide meaningful staffing for patients in Intensive Care Units. We believe that the regulations balance the needs of all parties, and we support the effort.

We want to ensure that in the assessment tools that are adopted by each hospital, the entire health care team in the unit is included in the assessment of needs and staffing. In particular, we do not want to see the Hospitals scapegoating other ancillary staff because of the nurse staffing needs of a patient. A nurse should be freed to do the direct patient care that is needed, and not have to answer phones, perform the duties of a C.N.A., clean the rooms, or transport patients in appropriately. This regulation attempts to guarantee that a patient receives the appropriate level of nursing care based on their condition; other parts of the health care team need to stay in place to support that patient.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. Turner".

Veronica Turner

Executive Vice President

1199-UHE, MA Division