

1/31/2018

Dear Representative Claman,

Thank you for your support of HB 312. As a health care professional who has been assaulted multiple times while on duty I feel it is imperative for the police to have a more aggressive law regarding assaults against health care professionals. The current laws do allow police to take patients who have been assaultive to the appropriate place, which I believe is a jail cell. More often than not a patient who has committed assault against health care worker will be cited and released. Even for the most serious and repetitive offenders. Please continue to support the safety of our Alaskan health care workers.

Sincerely,

Ed Czech RN

Anchorage, AK

Lizzie Kubitz

From: Gena Deck <radeck@alaska.edu>
Sent: Friday, February 02, 2018 9:27 AM
To: Rep. Chuck Kopp; Rep. Matt Claman; Lizzie Kubitz
Subject: House Bill 312

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Good morning. Thank you for introducing House Bill 312 that will be up for public hearings on Monday, February 5th.

This bill is meaningful to me in that I am the person working in the Emergency Department in Juneau strangled by a patient. I have strong feelings about the bill, and will hopefully have an opportunity to voice support on Monday during the public hearings.

The impact of violence in the workplace extends far beyond the day of the event. The judicial process is difficult, and often nurses and others in the health care environment do not speak up because it is so torturous, and often will little justice for the perpetrator. In Alaska's small towns, including Juneau, the issue is complicated further by lack of other health care alternatives. Therefore the interactions at the hospital and in the community are not single events.

Thank you again for promoting the bill. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my experience and those of my peers in person.

Gena Deck, MSN, RN
Assistant Professor, Nursing
University of Alaska Anchorage
907-796-6372

House Judiciary 2/7/18
Written Testimony

February 1, 2018

Dianne Dalen
314 Slater Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Dear Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

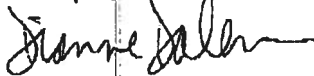
I am writing to you to ask your support for House Bill 312, an act relating to arrest without a warrant for assault in the fourth degree at a health care facility; and relating to an aggravating factor a sentencing for a felony offense against a medical professional at a healthcare facility.

I have been a nurse for 41 years with over half that time spent working as an Emergency Room nurse at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital. Over the years I've watched health care delivery improve while treatment of medical professions deteriorate. While I love serving my community I am sad to say that during my career I've been physically and verbally assaulted on numerous occasions by patients including being spit on, yelled at, receiving verbal threats of harm, scratched and hit. The latest attack occurred in October 2017 when I was physically assaulted by a young male.

This young man was brought to Fairbanks Memorial Hospital Emergency Room by law enforcement after he had been using methamphetamines for approximately four days. The intention of law enforcement was to have this man placed in protective custody in the ER where he can be observed in a safe environment until he was able to metabolize the drug. The man was agitated and provided medication to calm him. When a member of our security staff stepped away to retrieve a warm blanket to provide to him, the man bolted out of his room and punched me in the jaw. The strength behind the punch immediately knocked me to the ground furthering injuring my arm during the fall. Although a police report was filed, the man was not arrested for the assault.

I returned to work on my next scheduled shift with a large fist size purple bruise on my jaw and continued to provide medical treatment to the members of my community that I love dearly. While the bruise eventually healed, the emotional scars of the incident will never leave my mind and the minds of my coworkers. Healthcare providers took an oath to do no harm and in the process risk their lives trying to save the lives of others. Sadly, my story is not unique. It's estimated that between 8% and 38% of healthcare workers suffer physical violence at some point in their careers and by showing your support for HB 312 you are showing your support for the health and safety of our healthcare workers.

Thank you,



Dianne Dalen

458-5556

Lizzie Kubitz

From: House Judiciary
Sent: Tuesday, February 06, 2018 8:50 AM
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: You got a message "Testimony for SB 312"

From: WordPress [mailto:wordpress@akhouse.org]
Sent: Monday, February 05, 2018 3:09 PM
To: Rep. Matt Claman <Rep.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>
Subject: You got a message "Testimony for SB 312"

From: David Scordino
Subject: Testimony for SB 312

Message Body:

I apologize for the broken connection of my cell phone. I did not write my testimony but I have attempted to summarize it as best as possible.

My name is Dr. David Scordino and I am an Emergency Physician at Alaska Regional Hospital. I write in strong support of SB 312 and use this testimony to provide an additional story of support as well as to answer some of the questions raised by the Representatives during the prior testimonies. A few months ago, I had a patient present to my Emergency Department complaining of acute abdominal pain. Their behavior was unruly and they struck out at myself, the nurses and security officers attempting to help get the patient in the bed, assess and treat them. During the deluge of verbal and physical assault, the patient threatened to kill every person in that room in turn, as well as, kill our children, spouses and pets. This patient was not intoxicated nor experiencing an acute mental health emergency. However, according to EMTALA and liability obligations, I could not discharge this patient despite the patient's behavior nor the acts of violence. If the patient had a surgical emergency in their abdomen then I would be liable for this missed diagnosis and the patient would suffer potential harm. Similarly, for the person who may be intoxicated, their confusion may also be an indication of an intracranial hemorrhage, which is a life threatening condition where blood is surrounding or in the brain. A misdiagnosis in this scenario is dangerous to that patient, since a delay can result in death and it is dangerous to the provider as they have medical liability for this patient. Even if the person punches me in the face, my medical liability does not go away. In smaller hospitals and rural hospitals, there may not be another provider to assume care and thus, even after they are abused by this person; they may need to go back in the room and try to care for them.

I have heard concerns regarding alcohol, drugs and mental health. I agree that these issues exacerbate the problem however, multiple of the individuals that have either assaulted myself or some of my co-workers did not have any of these. I do however, agree that the states mental health and substance abuse capabilities is greatly lacking and that additional funding and resources for these would be a welcome improvement. These do not however, negate the need for this bill to help to deter this form of workplace violence. Do you know any other workplace where almost every employee can describe, often in detail, a time when they were assaulted or they felt their life was in danger? I can think of very few and this is why healthcare workers are being singled out in this bill because we have been singled out as a workplace with increasing violence.

Additionally, unlikely other workplaces, we can not stop someone from coming back to our hospital and can not simply remove them if they have not been medically stabilized under EMTALA and under medical liability as I previously described. This makes the healthcare setting unique.

I thank you for your time and for the introduction of SB 312. I apologize again for my technical difficulties. I am open to questions at anytime.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on Representative MATT CLAMAN's legislative website
(http://akhouse.org/rep_claman/contact-me/)