

STATE OF MAINE

—
**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND ELEVEN**
—

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATION AND
RESOLVE OF MEDICAL CARE PROFESSIONALS IN HOSPITALS**

WHEREAS, emergency medical care providers and medical care professionals in hospitals are committed to providing treatment to any injured or ill person, regardless of the circumstance; and

WHEREAS, studies show an increasing number of assaults against hospital medical care workers resulting in bodily harm; and

WHEREAS, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a 2002 publication entitled Violence: Occupational Hazards in Hospitals explaining that violence in hospitals is often different from violence in other workplaces because it results from patients and families who may feel frustrated, vulnerable and out of control; and

WHEREAS, hospital medical care professionals are particularly vulnerable to workplace assaults because of several unique risk factors such as the open, welcoming environment of hospitals and the resulting continuous stream of patients and visitors, the increase in the number of patients with substance abuse issues and the presence of distraught family members; and

WHEREAS, recent studies report that workplace violence is a significant and widespread public health concern among health care workers, and not only among those workers in emergency or psychiatric departments, and the health care sector in general continues to lead all other industry sectors in the incidence of nonfatal workplace assaults; and

WHEREAS, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that, in 2000, almost half of all nonfatal injuries from violent acts against workers occurred in the health care sector; and

WHEREAS, a recent survey found that 20% of a hospital's staff reported a physical assault in the last 5 shifts worked and one Florida study reported that 100% of emergency department nurses had experienced verbal threats and 82% had been physically assaulted; and

WHEREAS, although staff in other hospital units also reported unacceptably high levels of verbal threats and physical violence, emergency department staff experienced the highest volume of reported assaults; and

WHEREAS, violence against medical care professionals occurs regardless of the size or location of the hospital or community; and

WHEREAS, the safety of Maine's medical care professionals working in hospitals is essential for Maine's health care system to function properly to provide the best care for residents of the State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this

opportunity to send our deep appreciation to medical care professionals, who work in hospitals under conditions that are not only stressful but may be high-risk, for their dedication and resolve; and be it further

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Legislature, recognize the serious nature and unacceptably high number of violent acts committed against medical care professionals in hospitals and the need to better ensure a safe working environment for those workers and we express support for exploring future measures designed specifically to enhance safety for medical care professionals in hospitals and in the medical field; and be it further

RESOLVED: That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Maine Emergency Nurses Association, the Maine Hospital Association, the Maine Prosecutors Association, the Maine Sheriffs' Association and the Maine Chiefs of Police Association.