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Association of America

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June 29, 2023

The Honorable Larry Bucshon
United States House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Madeleine Dean
United State House of Representatives
150 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative Bucshon and Representative Dean:

On behalf of our nearly 450 trauma center members, the Trauma Center Association of America (TCAA) would like to express our appreciation and support for the Safety from Violence for Healthcare Employees (SAVE) Act of 2023 (H.R. 2584).

The increase in health care workplace violence is a disturbing and widespread phenomenon in our industry. While the high stress and high stakes in acute care settings have always created a potential for rising tensions, workplace violence incidents are increasing. Prior to the pandemic, workplace violence was already a concern, but according to nationwide reports, there has been a remarkable surge in incidents during the pandemic. This is unacceptable and unsustainable. Nurses and physicians cannot provide attentive care when they are afraid for their personal safety, distracted by disruptive patients or family members, or traumatized from prior attacks.

To keep workers safe, hospitals have invested in various countermeasures, such as increased security, protective barriers at workstations, and panic alarms for staff. These and other strategies are intended to protect workers from violence, and from perpetrators seeking them out beyond the workplace, but these measures alone are not enough.

Federal action, like the bill you have introduced, is necessary to ensure the safety of our frontline health care workers. The SAVE Act would make it a federal crime to assault or intimidate a hospital employee, actions that impede employees' ability to perform their duties. It would also aid hospitals by establishing a federal grant program at the Department of Justice to augment hospitals' efforts to reduce violence. Our members strongly support extending federal protections to health care workers; these protections will improve worker safety and ensure that patients are able to receive the quality care they need.

Strengthening the penalties for violence and threats of violence against health care workers sends a strong message that this behavior is unacceptable and must stop. Health care workers deserve our appreciation for their dedication and deserve to be protected from those who harm or threaten to harm them as they perform their duties.

The Trauma Center Association of America enthusiastically supports this critical and timely legislation and applauds you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Ward
President
Trauma Center Association of America