

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Recognizing the seriousness of widespread health care worker burnout in the United States and the need to strengthen health workforce well-being, and expressing support for the designation of March 18, 2024, as the inaugural “Health Workforce Well-Being Day of Awareness”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. REED, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. SMITH, Mr. KING, Mr. WARNER, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. KELLY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the seriousness of widespread health care worker burnout in the United States and the need to strengthen health workforce well-being, and expressing support for the designation of March 18, 2024, as the inaugural “Health Workforce Well-Being Day of Awareness”.

Whereas the capacity and well-being of the United States health workforce has been burdened for decades by an epidemic of burnout, and this trend has been exacerbated in recent years;

Whereas burnout can have wide-ranging consequences for individual health care workers, including occupational injury, risk of depression and suicide, lower morale and

productivity, absenteeism, and possible deleterious impact on patient care;

Whereas 50 percent of health care workers reported burnout in 2020;

Whereas, in 2020, 44 percent of nurses experienced physical violence and 68 percent experienced verbal abuse;

Whereas, in 2020, 69 percent of physicians experienced colloquial depression, 20 percent experienced clinical depression, and 13 percent had thoughts of suicide;

Whereas physicians, particularly female physicians, are more likely than the general population to die by suicide, and United States physicians are more likely to die by suicide than physicians in other nations;

Whereas rates of burnout have serious consequences for the capacity of the United States health system, particularly in regard to employee retention and recruitment;

Whereas, in 2023, job quitting among health care and social assistance workers was 9.2 percent higher than in February 2020;

Whereas approximately 40 percent of United States health care workers plan to leave their current role within the next 5 years;

Whereas the average operating margin for hospitals in the United States was reduced by 130 percent between 2019 and 2020, driven in part by persistent labor shortages;

Whereas staffing shortages and impacts of burnout on the mental health and productivity of health care workers raise serious concerns about quality of care and patient safety;

Whereas the decreased capacity of the United States health system constitutes both a serious public health concern and a challenge to economic security;

Whereas, in 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health launched the Health Worker Mental Health Initiative, which aims to raise awareness of health workers' mental health issues and improve trainings and resources to address the mental health of health workers;

Whereas, in 2022, Congress enacted the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act (42 U.S.C. 294s et seq.), which established grants and required other activities to improve mental and behavioral health among health care providers;

Whereas, in 2022, the Office of the Surgeon General published an Advisory on Addressing Health Worker Burnout to call attention to the health worker burnout crisis and to the urgent need to support the well-being of the health workforce of the United States;

Whereas, in 2022, the National Academy of Medicine released the National Plan for Health Workforce Well-Being, delineating necessary actions to safeguard the United States health workforce; and

Whereas a more robust national focus on protecting the well-being and mental health of health care workers will improve outcomes for workers and patients, strengthen the United States health system, and support population health: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1 (1) expresses support for the designation of
2 March 18, 2024, as the inaugural “Health Work-
3 force Well-Being Day of Awareness”;

4 (2) recognizes the seriousness of widespread
5 health care worker burnout in the United States and
6 the need to strengthen health workforce well-being;
7 and

8 (3) supports the goals and ideals of the Health
9 Workforce Well-Being Day of Awareness, which in-
10 clude—

11 (A) raising public awareness about the im-
12 portance of protecting the well-being of physi-
13 cians, nurses, and other health care profes-
14 sionals to sustain the capacity of the United
15 States health system and ensure the quality of
16 patient care;

17 (B) mobilizing action to support the well-
18 being of physicians, nurses, and other health
19 care professionals across multiple sectors, in-
20 cluding Federal, State, and local governments,
21 health systems, insurers and payers, health in-
22 formation technology companies, educational,
23 training, and accreditation organizations, pri-
24 vate and nonprofit organizations, media and

1 communications companies, and organizations
2 that employ health care workers;

3 (C) creating and sustaining positive work
4 and learning environments and culture;

5 (D) investing in measurement, assessment,
6 strategies, and research;

7 (E) supporting mental and behavioral
8 health, including removing barriers to accessing
9 care and treatment, and reducing stigma;

10 (F) engaging effective tools and technology
11 that reduce administrative burdens on physi-
12 cians, nurses, and other health care profes-
13 sionals;

14 (G) establishing well-being as a long-term
15 value in health organizations; and

16 (H) recruiting and retaining a diverse and
17 inclusive health workforce.