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Dear Ms. Cannon,

RE: An opposition letter on HB2524

I am a master's prepared Registered Nurse in the state of Kansas with over 19 years of experience with most of my nursing career spent caring for the aging population within long term care facilities. I have experienced much joy working with this vulnerable population; however, it has not always been easy. I am not one to hide from hard work by no means, but unsafe staff versus patient ratios which places the patient at risk is the main reason I left working solely for one facility and almost left the nursing profession entirely. Agency nurses have always been the saving grace when staff could not be found, or when staff were so overwhelmed by the number of hours worked just to provide the basics of care. The purpose of this letter is to state my opposition for HB 2524.

I could quote statistics, but I am sure you are aware of the nursing shortage we are facing not only in Kansas, but throughout the nation. This is not something new to us as even while working as a nursing instructor we could see the numbers of applicants dwindling each year. This has been an issue for quite a while. While staffing has been an ongoing issue, the regulations and expectations placed upon nurses has only increased and many nurses are leaving the field as a result. Nursing agencies are not to blame for the exodus of nurses, instead, they have continued to provide the staffing that is necessary to provide the quality of care to the residents of facilities as expected. Nurses have much responsibility placed upon them, with little to no financial gain. For an example, while working as a nursing instructor at a community college I was expected to obtain my MSN to teach. My pay was approximately \$48,000/yr. and my student loans are well over \$100,000. I will always have student loan payments and I accept that as I value my education, but financially I will never be ahead, and I continue to work in nursing.

The problem does not lay in the hands of nursing agencies, the problem is within the healthcare field and the non-existence of programs that assist nurses and provide relief for overwhelming working conditions. Passing HB2524 would have detrimental effects to most of the facilities across Kansas as well as to the nurses that have faithfully assisted in the care of patients prior to the pandemic and during the last two years of COVID-19. Healthcare reconstruction is needed across the board, but HB2524 is not the answer.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Folck, RN, MSN