



Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee Public Health  
In Support of H.1958/S.1206 - An Act Relative to Patient Safety  
By Judith Deutsch, LWVMA Specialist on Health Care  
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The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts supports the Patient Safety Act because:

- the League supports quality health care for all residents,
- the League supports the accreditation of institutions that assure competence and reasonable standards in the practice of health care,
- the passage and implementation of H.1958/S.1206 will enforce such standards, and
- it would prevent the current occurrences when there are an insufficient number of nurses on duty to provide quality care.

We appreciate the fact that, in your last session, the Legislature passed a law establishing safe patient limits for nurses working in Intensive Care Units. However, similar scientifically-based limits are acutely needed in all hospital departments.

Among other alarming facts, a survey conducted by Anderson Robbins Research for the Mass Nurses Association in 2015 has shown that:

- 25% report patient deaths directly attributable to nurses having too many patients to care for at one time
- 50% report injury and harm to patients due to understaffing
- 61% report medication errors due to understaffing
- 81% report that they lack the time to educate patients and provide adequate discharge planning

Furthermore, nurses are reporting that, not only are patients suffering because of current understaffing, but also that the too-frequent physical attacks on nurses are caused in large part by that same understaffing.

For these reasons, the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts urges you to pass this bill favorably out of committee and work to see that it is passed in the General Court and implemented. Patients, nursing staff and taxpayers deserve no less.

Thank you for your consideration.