March 11, 2022

Delegate Shane E. Pendergrass
District 13
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates

Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
District 21
Vice Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates

Delegate Heather Bagnall
District 33
Maryland House of Delegates

Dear Chairwoman Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk, and Delegate Bagnall:

AIHA, the association for scientists and professionals committed to preserving and ensuring occupational and environmental health and safety (OEHS), strongly encourages you and your General Assembly colleagues to swiftly pass House Bill 1389¹, which would help protect Marylanders from workplace violence in healthcare settings. Swift action is needed because, as the U.S. Government Accountability Office found, healthcare workers are nearly five times as likely to suffer a workplace violence injury requiring time away from work as all other workers.²

House Bill 1389 would help protect Marylanders from workplace violence in healthcare settings by requiring the Secretary of Health to establish the Prevent Workplace Violence in Health Care Settings Public Awareness Campaign Workgroup. The Workgroup would be


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responsible for developing and creating a plan to implement a public awareness campaign focused on preventing workplace violence in health care settings.

AIHA expands upon this need in our White Paper on the Prevention of Workplace,\(^3\) in which we support the following:

1. OSHA’s swift rulemaking on workplace violence prevention in healthcare and social services and H.R. 7141, Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act, which directs OSHA to issue a standard.

2. Employer implementation of facility specific workplace violence prevention programs to protect all personnel from exposure to occupational violence, especially in industries with high rates of workplace violence.

3. Industrial hygienists’ participation in interdisciplinary teams that develop and implement workplace violence prevention programs. Environmental design, administrative controls, adequate staffing and behavioral strategies should all be considered in the development of site-specific workplace violence prevention programs.

4. Advocacy for an expanded budget for public health research on gun violence in the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the CDC and the National Institute of Justice (Department of Justice), and for the release of data about gun crimes from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

5. Continued corporate, academic, and government funding to support research in workplace violence prevention, particularly in the areas of:
   a. characterization of environmental, organizational, and personal factors for workplace violence in high-risk industries and occupations;
   b. analysis of injuries, lost work time, and costs associated with workplace violence;
   c. evaluation of the effectiveness of controls such as security hardware, alarms, workplace redesign, emergency systems, training programs, written prevention programs, and trauma response;
   d. the testing of intervention strategies for effectiveness; and
   e. program evaluation.

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Conclusion and Next Steps
AIHA urges you to swiftly enact House Bill 1389 into law, protecting more Marylanders from workplace violence in healthcare settings. We look forward to working with you on this and related bills. If you have any questions about AIHA’s support for this bill or other matters, please contact Mark Ames (who is also a Maryland resident) at mames@aiha.org or (703) 846-0730.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Chief Executive Officer
AIHA

About AIHA
AIHA is the association for scientists and professionals committed to preserving and ensuring occupational and environmental health and safety in the workplace and community. Founded in 1939, we support our members with our expertise, networks, comprehensive education programs, and other products and services that help them maintain the highest professional and competency standards. More than half of AIHA’s nearly 8,500 members are Certified Industrial Hygienists and many hold other professional designations. AIHA serves as a resource for those employed across the public and private sectors as well as to the communities in which they work. For more information, please visit www.aiha.org.

Cc:
Senator Katherine Klausmeier
Senator Delores G. Kelley
Senator Brian J. Feldman