



Richard R. Lewis, Chairperson  
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

## Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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December 11, 2019

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
State Senator  
188 State Street Room 907  
Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247

### **Re: Resolution in Support of the "Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act"**

Dear Hon. Stewart-Cousins:

At the General Meeting on Tuesday, November 26, 2019, with a vote of 35 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention, Community Board 12 Manhattan, passed a resolution calling upon the State Legislature to pass and the Governor to enact the proposed Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act (S. 1032 / A. 2954) to ensure that acute care facilities and nursing homes meet appropriate minimum staffing ratios for nurses and direct care staff and urging that the legislation be amended to include several provisions listed below.

**WHEREAS**, According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the inadequacy of nurse and other direct care staffing levels leads to poor patient outcomes; and

**WHEREAS**, Research funded by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ) has found that hospitals with lower nurse staffing levels have higher rates of pneumonia, shock, cardiac arrests, urinary tract infections and upper gastrointestinal bleeds leading to higher costs and mortality from hospital-acquired complications; and

**WHEREAS**, The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) published research that estimated five additional deaths per 1,000 patients occurred in hospitals that routinely staff with a 1:8 nurse-to-patient ratio compared to those staffing with a 1:4 nurse-to-patient ratio and that the odds of patient death increased by 7% for each additional patient the nurse must care for at one time; and

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**WHEREAS**, Research shows that better staffing policies not only result in better patient outcomes but also lower the operating costs of health care providers by (a) reducing the recruitment and training expenses resulting from staff burnout and turnover, (b) lowering the penalties and reduced reimbursements imposed because of poor patient outcomes and unnecessary readmissions, (c) lowering patient length of stay, (d) reducing legal and malpractice costs, and (e) not lowering staff productivity due to workplace injuries and fatigue, while increasing patient satisfaction scores and hospital quality ratings; and

**WHEREAS**, According to a report published by Health Services Research in 2012, nursing homes with safe staffing ratios have a better quality of care in their facilities and improved the functional status of the residents; and

**WHEREAS**, In 2004 California passed a law requiring hospitals to institute minimum nurse-to-patient ratios, and studies have shown that nurses there have reported improved patient care outcomes and lower workplace injury rates; and

**WHEREAS**, The proposed Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act (S. 1032 / A. 2954) would require all acute care hospitals and nursing homes in New York State to comply with specific minimum nurse-to-patient ratios and staffing requirements, submit a facility staffing plan to the NY State Department of Health and require public disclosure of actual staffing levels; and

**WHEREAS**, Ensuring adequate nursing coverage for all patients is an important public health goal that will improve the quality of care in acute care hospitals and nursing homes; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, Community Board 12 - Manhattan calls upon the State Legislature to pass and the Governor to enact the proposed Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act (S. 1032 / A. 2954) to ensure that acute care facilities and nursing homes meet appropriate minimum staffing ratios for nurses and direct care staff, and be it further

**RESOLVED**, Community Board 12 - Manhattan urges that the legislation be amended to include the following provisions:

- flexible standards that would apply in the case of emergencies;
- a requirement that the health care facilities' nurse-to-patient ratios be publicly disclosed on their websites and on the NY State Department of Health website;
- a review of the effectiveness of this law and its impact on nurses and other personnel in the hospitals and nursing homes three years after the law takes effect; and

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- a commitment by the state to provide enough funding so that support staff will not be laid off by any health care facility as it hires additional nurses to comply with the law and so that no facility will have to eliminate services or even close as a result of this law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Lewis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "R".

Richard R. Lewis  
Chairperson

cc: Hon. Andrew Cuomo, Governor  
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor  
Hon. Jumaane Williams Public Advocate  
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller  
Hon. Gale Brewer, Borough President  
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman  
Hon. Carl Heastie, NY State Assembly Speaker

Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator  
Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator  
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member  
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member  
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member  
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member