



## **ANNA Urges Congress to Pass The Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act (H.R. 1195 and S. 4182)**

The American Nephrology Nurses Association (ANNA) is a nonprofit organization with a membership of over 8,500 registered nurses and other health care professionals at all levels of practice. ANNA members work in settings such as chronic kidney disease management, peritoneal dialysis, hemodialysis, continuous renal replacement therapy, transplantation, industry, and government and regulatory agencies.

From the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2019, the incidence rate for violence and other injuries by persons in health care and social assistance industry was 14.7 for every 10,000 full time workers. The total rate for all industries was 4.4. The *Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act* requires the Department of Labor (DOL) to address workplace violence in health care, social service, and other sectors. Specifically, the Agency must issue an interim occupational safety and health standard that requires certain employers to take actions to protect workers and other personnel from workplace violence.

### **The Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act**

The legislation was introduced on February 22, 2021, by Representative Joe Courtney (D-CT-2nd). The House of Representatives passed the bill in April 2021. The legislation would protect health care workers by doing the following:

- The workplace violence prevention standard would be based on the Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Healthcare and Social Service Workers published by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in 2015.
- The plan would be developed with participation from direct care employees and employee representatives. It would also be tailored and specific to conditions and hazards, including patient-specific risk factors and risk factors specific to each work area or unit.
- After a workplace violence incident, risk, or hazard of which an employer has knowledge, the employer shall conduct an investigation of such incident, risk, or hazard. Employers would provide training and education to employees who may be exposed to workplace violence hazards and risks.
- The bill defines workplace violence as the threat, or use of, physical force against an employee that results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury, psychological trauma, or stress. It also defines the threat of violence as fear for one's safety because there is a reasonable possibility an individual might be physically injured.

**Recommendation:** ANNA urges Congress to pass the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act (H.R. 1195 and S. 4182).