



**Senate Commerce Committee**

**February 6, 2018**

**SB 422 – Relative to Advance Notice of Work Schedules**

**Testimony**

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Paula Minnehan and I am the Vice President of State Government Relations at the New Hampshire Hospital Association (NHHA), representing all 26 of the state's community hospitals as well as all of our specialty hospitals.

The New Hampshire Hospital Association has concerns with SB 422, as introduced. Hospitals employ many hourly employees, including essential clinicians, such as nurses. Hospitals work to provide ample notice to their hourly employees of their work schedules. However, hospitals must adjust work schedules often, depending on the patient census as well as patient acuity, staff vacancies and ensuring smooth operations of all essential clinical areas within the hospital on a 24 hour, seven days a week basis. The standard practice in NH hospitals is to allow for flexibility of schedules.

We are requesting that the bill be amended to exempt health care facilities from the requirements outlined in the bill. While hospitals attempt to schedule all hourly employees in advance, these schedules must allow for flexibility. In fact, this is the current situation with the spike in flu-related illnesses, which has resulted in a very high census in our hospitals, outpatient clinics and emergency rooms. In order to properly care for their patients staff schedules need to be modified.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our comments with you and appreciate your consideration of our request to amend the bill to exempt health care facilities from the requirements outlined in the bill. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.