



**Danbury Nurses' Union Unit #47 Local 5047  
AFT-CT, AFT Healthcare, AFL- CIO**

1 Padanaram Road Suite 145 Danbury, CT 06811 (203) 748-4774  
FAX (203) 748-2988 E-mail [unit47@aol.com](mailto:unit47@aol.com) <http://ct.aft.org/unit47>

**Written Testimony of**

**Sandra Foley, RN  
Danbury Nurses' Union Unit #47, AFT Local 5047, AFL-CIO**

**To Representative Betsy Ritter, Senator Andrea Stillman  
and Members of the Public Health Committee**

**Re: S.B. No 970 AN ACT CONCERNING WORK PLACE VIOLENCE  
PREVENTION AND RESPONSE IN HEALTH CARE SETTINGS.**

**February 23, 2011**

I'm writing this letter in reference to the safety and security of co-workers at Danbury Hospital. Though improvements have been made recently, I feel as though there is much more that can be done. There have been several incidents that in my 20 year employment at Danbury Hospital that make you wonder if we are safe. Patients can be unpredictable and in the essence of illness, even family members can be irate in difficult situations. As tempers flare and in an environment that is strange and unusual, our security as workers is threatened in a daily basis.

Of course we are familiar with the recent shooting where a gunman severely wounded another coworker which was trying to help another co-worker calm her confused and angry patient. But what about the other incidents that go unreported but could have been just as serious?

I witnessed an angry patient who was in a drug-induced craze. He picked up his father and threw him onto the neighbor's bed, which the patient was in. As I watched the patient strangle his father, I desperately called out for help. I was unable to reach the phone to dial 55. No one heard my call and I was pushed into the hallway with the rumbling two men. Finally, I got the message for CODE BLUE to initiate a response. Our security staff at Danbury Hospital is excellent and they are hardworking people, but cannot be everywhere at all times. I think if we had the panic buttons that we had in the past, this incident could have been resolved much quicker without the emotional and physical trauma to patients and staff.

Another issue is the 3-11 PM shift leaving after 12:20 AM. Security is no longer in the parking lot and it can be very scary at night. Though the garage is well lit, it would be comforting to know that we are safe.

Some floors receive patients that are psychologically impaired, and questionably dangerous. They need to be cleared medically until they are discharged and admitted to psychiatry. These people should be identified and should have a 24 hour 1:1 sitter to help keep them and the staff safe until the transition can be made. I recently heard a manager state "There are no more sitters." How could this be? Not very well thought out!

I urge you to support SB 970 so we can continue working on the safety of our patients and staff. Thank you for your time.

Sandra Foley, RN  
63 Reservoir Rd  
Southbury, CT 06488