



The New England Healthcare Employees Union District 1199 represents 26,000 healthcare workers in public and private settings across the state. The majority of our members – working in state human services, nursing homes, group homes, hospitals, and home care – are women of color who live in urban areas. Today we are supporting a number of bills on the agenda that, if passed, will bring the most basic of rights to Connecticut’s workers.

In Support of **SB 227: AN ACT CONCERNING A FAIR WORK WEEK SCHEDULE**

In every workplace it is important to have some degree of stability when it comes to knowing your schedule and having the ability to plan your life around that schedule. This is particularly important for low income workers, who rely on every hour of every shift to make ends meet. The protections that this bill would put in place would allow workers to confidently plan their lives and budgets around their work schedule without fear of having their hours ripped away from them at the last minute.

This issue is acutely felt by caregivers in our state’s nursing homes. Nursing home operators will schedule workers to after scheduling them to work a shift on the basis of low census. This means that after a worker pays for their child to attend daycare for the day, pays for public transportation to get to work, and passes up other employment opportunities for that day, they must go back home empty handed occurring a financial net loss for the day.

Nursing home operators will claim that their ability to send nursing home staff home the day of their scheduled shift helps to ensure quality care for their residents. However, in the event that the census is higher than anticipated, additional staff are not called into work. Patient care is the guise behind which operators hide, when in reality this policy is simply meant to ensure that staffing remains at bare minimum to maximize the facility’s profits. Having additional staff on hand to provide care NEVER hurts patient care. Please pass SB 227 and protect workers statewide from unfair scheduling practices.

In Support of **SB 660: AN ACT EXPANDING WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS FOR MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENTS SUFFERED BY ALL WORKERS**
and In Support of **SB 666: AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS FOR CERTAIN MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENTS AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR CORRECTIONAL STAFF, EMERGENCY MEDICAL STAFF AND DISPATCHERS**

Finally, District 1199 represents about 600 healthcare workers in the Department of Correction. We support this bill because our members know the strain of working to deliver healthcare services in DOC while being massively understaffed. Daily we hear stories from our members

that show their willingness to put themselves into harm's way to ensure safety of inmates, other staff and the community.

PTSI coverage can help to cut down on the number of employee suicides and helps employees get back to work. It reduces the amount of terminations from psychologically injured employees. In addition, it is a cost effective way to get workers back to work. Let's face it, it's also the right thing to do. Every day our members work to make life inside of prison better for the incarcerated people they care for. In the event that something should happen, they should be able to get the treatment they need to be able to get back to doing the job they love.

In Support of **HB 6343: AN ACT ENSURING FAIR EMPLOYEE PROTECTIONS FOR GIG WORKERS.**

HB 6343 would provide basic labor standards to a growing "gig" workforce. As times change and large corporations figure out ways around the labor laws we have fought for in America, we have to change as well. This bill is a start. This bill would make sure that workers are keeping more in their paychecks, as well as extending DOL and basic NLRB protections to them.

The right to organize provides workers a voice on the job; it evens the playing field when it comes to wages, benefits and working standards. We should not still have to talk about and fight for these types of protections for workers. All workers should have the right to form a union, and this bill is another step toward recognizing the value and worth of all workers

In Support of **SB 658: AN ACT REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO RECALL LAID-OFF WORKERS IN ORDER OF SENIORITY.**

SB 658 would bring protections and structure for workers who have been laid off during the ongoing COVID pandemic. 2020 was a year that none of us had planned for, and as a result many workers were pushed to the brink and over the cliff when it came to savings and being able to afford to take care of their families. Many of them were laid off and as our economy starts to bounce back from the COVID pandemic, we need to make sure these workers, who have suffered the most, are taken care of and brought back to work as quickly and as fairly as possible.