

## Fran Lusk

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**From:** Maria George <getfittg@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 29, 2022 2:57 PM  
**To:** Fran Lusk  
**Cc:** Jonathan Walden  
**Subject:** Testimonial against HB 2524

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Good afternoon Fran,

Concerning HB 2524 pertaining to supplemental staffing. I am speaking in OPPOSITION to the proposal. For me COVID has drastically turned the tables in Healthcare. Before COVID, I could show up to work and reasonably expect all staff to show up. Since COVID has hit however the number of people leaving healthcare has reached gigantic proportions. Most of the time at least one if not more staff members do not show up for their assigned shift. Agency has helped to fill that void in an essential way. With many healthcare facilities paying little more than minimum wage, most burnt out employees have either quit healthcare or gone to work for agency. Agency provides the benefit of flexibility, a living wage, and the ability to manage burnout better. It does this by allowing the healthcare worker to pick and choose their schedule in a meaningful way to them. This means taking a day off is as easy as not picking up a shift that day. They don't have to submit a request for their manager to consider approving their time off. It is only because of this that many have stayed in healthcare. It is hard enough to work in a short-staffed, over worked environment. It isn't up to regulations to have staffing shortages of this magnitude. The residents suffered a little from occasional short-staffing before COVID. They are suffering far more now. Agency is trying to fill the void. However if they are told their work is no longer worth just compensation for being flexible to go to any facility or shift, how are they expected to stay in the industry? If a facility staff member doesn't show up and there is no agency, then what will happen to the residents? If there is no one to care for them, residents will suffer from neglect in a way never before imaginable. Conditions for patients everywhere will reach a dangerous level. How are they to receive good care if the facility staff call in or don't show up? If agency is discounted and most facilities are already short, how will the patients receive care? Instead of taking away the livable wages of agency, which are fair since agency picks up when and where needed, why not raise the wages of the facility staff. It will not completely fill the staffing shortage, however reducing just compensation for agency will result in far worse patient to staff ratios. It is an unjust world in which we live where fast food workers are payed better than those who heal and save lives daily. I am a single mother who escaped an abusive situation. I chose not to seek child support from my abuser in the hope he would leave us alone. That has however meant I have to work harder and more than if I had that assistance. It is worth it for the peace of being free from abuse. Adding to that I have a child that has a complex medical condition, and it means a total of at least 3 months off work per year for surgeries, doctor appointments, sick days and so forth. Agency being flexible has allowed me to continue to have a job I love. It has allowed me to work around the Dr appointments without having to ask for time off every time. It has allowed me to make a decent living and still be there as a Mom. I am actually able to save for when I must take off work. I have never been able to do that with facility wages. Reducing our pay would mean I would be looking for a job outside of healthcare. I am a newer nurse and have been in healthcare since 2016. I do not want to change careers. If it means being able to take care of my children though, I will.

Thank you,  
Maria George, LPN