



May 7, 2019

Wayne A. Smith
President & CEO

The Honorable William Bush
411 Legislative Avenue
Dover, DE 19901

Ref: Support for HB 144

Dear Representative Bush,

Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children
Roy Proujansky, MD,
Chief Executive of
Nemours Delaware
Valley Operations

Bayhealth
Terry Murphy,
President & CEO

Beebe Healthcare
Rick Schaffner, RN
Interim President & CEO

Christiana Care Health System
Janice E. Nevin, M.D.
MPH
President & CEO

Nanticoke Health Services
Steven A. Rose, RN, MN
President & CEO

Saint Francis Healthcare
Daniel Sinnott
President & CEO

Delaware Healthcare Association
Wayne A. Smith
President & CEO

Thank you for being the lead House sponsor on HB 144 to amend Title 11 of the Delaware Code Relating to Assault. The Delaware Healthcare Association (DHA) is pleased to support this legislation.

DHA represents hospitals and health care delivery systems in Delaware and advocates for policies that create an environment for enabling every Delawarean to be as healthy as they can be. HB 144 aims to address the increase in violence against health care workers by expanding the felony offense of Assault in the Second Degree to anyone that intentionally causes physical injury on any person providing health care treatment or employed by a health care provider. Assault in Second Degree currently applies to various professions, including physicians and nurses, but does not include numerous employees of a health system that come into contact with patients and families on a regular basis. These may include Activity Attendants, Medical Assistants and office staff, Nursing Assistants, Physical Therapists, Public Safety and Security Officers, Respiratory Therapists, EKG Technicians, Radiology Technologists, etc. HB 144 would ensure that all health care employees have the same protection under the law.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the rate of serious workplace violence incidents was more than four times greater in health care than in private industry and there are nearly as many serious violent injuries in health care as all the other industries combined. These individuals have dedicated their lives to caring for others, yet they are more likely to face serious assault than in any other career. We are pleased that this bill takes steps to address this growing problem and protect our health care workers.

DHA is pleased to support HB 144 and looks forward to working with you and the members of the General Assembly to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne A. Smith".

Wayne A. Smith
President & CEO

