



COMMITTEE ON
**EDUCATION
& LABOR**
REPUBLICANS

**COMMITTEE
STATEMENT**

**Statement in Opposition to H.R. 1195
Rep. Fred Keller (R-PA), Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections
Markup of H.R. 7, H.R. 1065, and H.R. 1195
March 24, 2021**

(As prepared for delivery)

“Thank you. We all agree that violence in any form is wrong. The data show that our health care and social service workers are the most susceptible to occupational injuries by workplace violence. It is our duty to work together to find a solution to this serious problem.

Democrats will tell you that H.R. 1195 is the answer, but unfortunately, a rushed, one-size-fits-all initiative that cuts corners and bypasses necessary regulatory analysis while ignoring the data, recommendations, and experiences of valuable stakeholders will not solve anything.

This strategy would burden struggling rural hospitals during a time when so many in Pennsylvania and around the country are at risk of closure.

The daily risks that our health care and social service workers face in the workplace are of the utmost concern and deserve thorough consideration.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recognizes these risks and is currently working on a rule to address this important issue. This rulemaking process must account for the important views of impacted stakeholders and ensure effective, long-lasting policy.

From major hospitals to rural clinics, all voices are needed to make an informed decision that provides adequate solutions.

H.R. 1195 will circumvent many of the important regulatory laws and executive orders that guide the OSHA rulemaking process.

American workers deserve more than rushed legislation that forces OSHA to issue a pre-judged solution to a complex problem.

Through the general duty clause of the O-S-H act, which requires employers to take affirmative steps to protect their employees and provide a workplace that is free from recognized hazards, OSHA has issued citations against employers relating to workplace violence incidents, and most hospitals across the country have established organization-wide initiatives to address workplace violence.

Rushing to mandate an ill-conceived response to this problem will not only result in an insufficient solution; it will also be damaging. The health care industry is currently handling the pandemic admirably but will likely face sweeping and burdensome OSHA regulations from the Biden administration on COVID-19 in the near future.

On top of these inflexible rules, the Congressional Budget Office previously estimated that compliance costs would be at least \$2.7 billion for private facilities and \$100 million for public facilities over the first two years the rule prescribed by this legislation is in effect.

In the long-term, combined compliance costs for the private and public sectors would run at least \$1.35 billion annually, and substantial personnel and capital costs would result from the bill's requirements.

This strain on the industry will be felt especially by medical facilities in rural areas and other vulnerable communities with scarce resources, who have been operating on the front lines of the pandemic. We need to make sure they have every tool at their disposal to continue doing the great work they do in our communities every day.

Rather than issuing a rushed, prescriptive, and uninformed standard without appropriate public input and analysis, I join my fellow republicans on this

committee in calling for a responsible, workable, and thorough response to this serious issue. We owe that much to our front-line healthcare professionals as they fight COVID-19.

Overbearing regulations burden workers and stifle the economy. Preventing workplace violence in health care and social services settings is crucial, and we should get this done by allowing OSHA to issue a standard through the normal rulemaking process, which brings all experts and parties to the table.

Short-circuiting the process and rushing to a conclusion eliminates valuable technical and scientific input and will lead to unintended consequences, which could have a detrimental impact on improving workplace safety outcomes.”

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