

**Please Support H.R. 1309**  
**The Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act**

**Request**

Please support [H.R. 1309](#), the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act introduced by Congressman Joe Courtney (CT-D) to mandate the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to create a national standard requiring that healthcare and social service employers develop and implement a comprehensive workplace violence prevention plan.

**Background**

EMS personnel face extremely high rates of workplace violence. Violent incidents against EMS practitioners have been scientifically documented throughout the last decade, pointing to the need for stronger agency policies and better protection and training. EMS practitioners provide patient care to all those in need 24/7. However, they face an outsized risk of on-the-job violence, according to Department of Labor data.

Reports indicate that violence--most often from patients and those accompanying them--results in injury, loss of productivity, and pose serious safety concerns to healthcare workers across the country.

- Between 2011 and 2016, as reported in the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, at least 58 hospital workers died as a result of violence in their workplaces.
- A 2016 GAO study reported that rates of violence against healthcare workers are 12 times higher than rates for the overall workforce.
- In 2016, 70% of all nonfatal workplace assaults occurred in the healthcare and social service sectors.
- A 2018 survey conducted by the American College of Emergency Physicians found that 47% of emergency room doctors have been physically assaulted at work, and 8 in 10 workers surveyed report that this violence is affecting patient care.

This legislation represents a long overdue change to protect America's caring professions, including EMS, and would require OSHA to issue a Workplace Violence Prevention Standard, giving workers the security that their employers are implementing proven practices to reduce the risk of violence on the job.

The Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act:

- Addresses an epidemic of violence against healthcare and social service workers;
- Requires OSHA to create a federal workplace violence prevention standard mandating employers to develop comprehensive, workplace-specific plans to prevent violence before it happens;
- Sets a quick timeline on implementation to ensure timely protection for healthcare workers;
- Sets minimum requirements for the standard and for employers' workplace violence prevention plans. These requirements include unit-specific assessments and implementation of prevention measures, including physical changes to the environment, staffing for patient care and security, employee involvement in all steps of the plan, hands-on training, robust record keeping

requirements including a violent incident log, and protections for employees to report incidents to their employer and law enforcement.

### **Contact**

To learn more about H.R. 1309 or to co-sponsor, please contact Maria Costigan in Congressman Courtney's office at [maria.costigan@mail.house.gov](mailto:maria.costigan@mail.house.gov).

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