

Exhibit No. 4  
Date: 2/23/15  
Bill No. SB352

**Vicky Byrd**

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**From:** Deanna Evans <deannaevansmt@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 8:06 PM  
**To:** Vicky Byrd  
**Subject:** Fw: URGENT!! Testimony for Monday

I have worked in healthcare nearly 15 years. As a critical care nurse, I have the privilege of caring for people during some of the most vulnerable times of their lives. I have guided countless people through tragedy, loss, pain, joy and thankfully, even some miracles. It is not a cliché to say that there are people who enter our lives and reaffirm that our job in life is also our passion. I am a registered nurse. I love to care for people, this is why I do what I do. Unfortunately, during those many years, I have been the victim of assault both verbal and physical. I have been forced into a corner and screamed at by a patient with such vehemence that his spittle showered my face giving many restless nights sleep fearing his threats of "killing me" would come true. I was kicked in the stomach by a belligerent, angry man who wanted his cigarettes to smoke no matter that he was in the intensive care unit leaving me in such pain that caring for my other patients was a struggle. I have witnessed countless angry patients assault colleagues--some causing physical harm others leaving emotional wounds. Today, each of you have the power to initiate change.

There is an unreasonable expectation that those in healthcare should expect to accept violence, accept assault or accept being physically harmed just because "it's our job". I ask you, Senators, would you accept physical or verbal assault if it occurred in your home? In your office because of the job you do? Would you console your spouse or daughter who was so severely injured by a patient at work and say, "but it's just part of the job..."

I urge you, please support those of us who are caring for every member of our society. Give us the protection to go home safe from a job that places others before self. We matter. Those who harm us should be held accountable. Violence is never okay--even if you are just doing your job.

Please, support SB 352.

Deanna Evans, RN BS  
Billings, Montana

## Vicky Byrd

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**From:** Gretchen Aagaard-Shively <gaashively@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 5:55 PM  
**To:** Vicky Byrd  
**Subject:** Senate Bill 352

To whom it may concern,

After graduating from Oregon Health Sciences in 1989, many of my co workers have experienced work place violence from patients and their families. Aside from threats, slaps and pinches one coworker actually sustained a fractured jaw from an individual of sound mind kicking her in the face while she was attempting to change his soiled linen. He was an angry individual that was lashing out at all care taking staff.

It is not unusual to be threatend verbally which is in my opinion just another facit of the problem. Thourgh out my career I have dodged many blows and been threatend too many times to count. I learned early to counter these threats with the statement. "If you hurt me in any way I will press charges for assault and you will be spending the night in jail" Although I have escaped bodily harm I am aware that this is a hollow threat. I can threaten to file charges yes, but will the individual actually be prosecuted? Not likely.

In closing I would like to add my voice in support of Senate Bill 352 as no individual should be in danger in the work place from the very people they serve.

Thank You  
Gretchen Aagaard-Shively RN BSN  
[gaashively@outlook.com](mailto:gaashively@outlook.com)

## Vicky Byrd

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**From:** Brenda Donaldson <bdonaldson457@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2015 2:01 PM  
**To:** Vicky Byrd  
**Subject:** Violence testimony

To whom it may concern

As a Registered Nurse who has worked in the profession for twenty nine years, I have seen the dramatic increase of violent acts committed against health care personnel.

The profession I practice has always put the wellbeing and needs of the patient first. Sometimes this means with the risk of harm to the care provider. The culture has shifted from respecting and valuing those that provide care when a patient is in desperate need of help to one that somehow justifies acts of violence as a normal part of the job. I have seen first hand the debilitating physical as well as emotional impact that actual violent acts committed, or the threat of violent acts has had on my fellow colleagues. Many leave the profession entirely or attempt to change to an area of practice that they feel is safer.

We cannot afford to lose healthcare professionals due to fear of violence and the inability to hold accountable those that seek to harm those that selflessness provide care to all.

I would urge you to support SB 352.

Sincerely,

Brenda K. Donaldson RN

**From:** Carissa Hatling [mailto:[carissahat@gmail.com](mailto:carissahat@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2015 3:34 PM

**To:** Vicky Byrd

**Subject:** violence against healthcare workers

This bill is very important. As an Intensive Care unit for 15 years, I have been hit, kicked, spit at, pinched, scratched and verbally abused on at least a monthly basis. Some of these patients are not in their "right mind" but many are. If I was at the store, or at the park, and was hit, kicked, spit at, pinched, scratched or verbally abused, these events would be taken much more seriously. Nurses need to feel safe and supported in their positions.

Thank you,

Carissa Hatling, RN BSN CCRN

## Vicky Byrd

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**From:** Kimberly Kralicek  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 11:54 AM  
**To:** Vicky Byrd  
**Subject:** FW: Attn: Vicky Byrd: testimony

**Importance:** High

**From:** Deanna Evans [mailto:deannaevansmt@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2015 9:45 PM  
**To:** Montana Nurses Association  
**Subject:** Attn: Vicky Byrd: testimony  
**Importance:** High

Below, testimony for Monday's hearing. Thank you, Vicky for your being our voice!  
Deanna

----- Original Message -----

Subject: testimony  
From: "Sandmeier, Alecia" <[ASandmeier1@billingsclinic.org](mailto:ASandmeier1@billingsclinic.org)>  
To: [deannaevansmt@yahoo.com](mailto:deannaevansmt@yahoo.com)  
CC:

Deanna,

I would like to provide my testimony. As an EMT at Billings Clinic I have had a knife pulled on me, been bitten, slapped and things thrown at me. I have seen my fellow co-workers knocked out, pushed, spit on and even a pregnant nurse kicked in the stomach. In our position, as health care providers, we make sure safety is a priority for our patients. However, we need to be protected as well.

Alecia Sandmeier

Patient Care Technician II, ED/EMT

Yellowstone County

**From:** Brent and Rebecca Peters [<mailto:brpeters27@msn.com>]

**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 2:41 AM

**To:** Montana Nurses Association

**Subject:** Violence against healthcare workers

**Attn:** Vicky Byrd

To: Senate Judiciary Committee Members

Re: SB352 "Create Offense Related to Assault on Healthcare and Emergency Providers"

Dear Committee Members,

I would like to offer my support for the above mentioned bill. As a registered nurse with 16 years' experience, I have witnessed assaults on colleagues and have been assaulted myself by patients and by family/friends of patients. My experience with violence on healthcare providers is extensive and not solely based on experiences in Montana. This is a growing problem in our nation. I urge you to become a leader by approving this bill which helps to protect healthcare workers and emergency responders.

Once, I was involved in the care of an individual that had been admitted for alcohol intoxication. This patient became violent quickly when he felt the medication I was giving him was "not enough". He grabbed my stethoscope from around my neck. As I turned to run, he wrapped the stethoscope around my neck and began choking me. As I felt I was about to lose consciousness, he slipped and lost his grip. I was able to get away and ran to a room across the hall. Unfortunately, there was an elderly patient in that room that the violent patient began hitting. Choking me was not the scariest part of this story. This man had hit his head when he slipped and was bleeding. When he caught me in the other room, he wiped the blood from his eyes across my face and yelled, "you will die now, because I have AIDS". This was one of the scariest moments of my life. Fortunately, he tested negative for this disease and was only using this tactic to further terrorize me.

Throughout my career, I have been hit, punched, spit on, scratched, belittled and my life threatened more times than I can count. Healthcare workers do not deserve to just "put up" with this simply because we chose a profession where we care for those who are intoxicated or under the influence of substances that alter their normal behavior. As a colleague of mine stated, "If this person did this to me outside of work, they would be arrested. Why are they allowed to do it just because I am a nurse?"

**What healthcare workers and emergency responders do deserve is the opportunity to serve our community and support our families without risking injury, death or bodily harm.**

There is an urgent need to provide protection to a profession that has long been asked to overlook crimes against us.

PLEASE give your support to SB352 !

Thank you,

Rebecca Peters, RN  
1995 Saddleback Dr.  
Laurel, MT 59044

February 19, 2015

To whom it may concern:

Please consider helping ensure the safety of healthcare and emergency providers by passing SB352. As a critical care nurse I see patients during one of the worst times of their lives. I understand this and am happy and willing to support my patients through a difficult time. However, I am not willing to accept violence in my workplace as simply "part of the job."

I was recently caring for a patient who was intubated and placed on a ventilator prior to being admitted to our unit. We had limited contact information for this patient and communication was difficult. As the days went on, the patient was alert but still needing ventilator support. He was also angry. Many questions were answered with the flip of a middle finger. At one point, the patient was calm and I was trying desperately to communicate with him. Was he in pain? Cold? Short of breath? Was he simply confused as to the events of the previous days? All were answered with the shake of his head. Finally, he started wiggling his toes and motioning his head toward his feet. When I asked if he would like socks he emphatically nodded yes with a look of pure relief. I was both excited to have communicated with my patient and also upset with myself for having failed to previously address this basic "need." I came back with socks and stood at the foot of the bed to put them on. As I reached for his foot he pulled back and kicked me dead center of my sternum. It was clear that the act was intentional. Luckily, I was able to move back with the kick and avoid injury. Hours later a coworker was injured when the same patient grabbed onto her hand and refused to let go. It took two additional nurses to pry his hand off of hers, and the nurse required an x-ray to ensure that there were no broken bones.

While this is perhaps an extreme example of intentional and even premeditated violence, it is not an isolated event. And to me, it is absurd to not recognize actions like this as a crime.

Sincerely,

Mary Goldammer, RN, CCRN  
Yellowstone County

## Support for SB 352

I support SB352

I am a Family Nurse Practitioner in independent practice. I have had several incidences of violence that I have dealt with in my 32 years of practice.

8 years ago in Great Falls, I left the clinic I was working at around 9 pm. I had dealt with a lady seeking narcotics earlier in the day. I locked the clinic set the alarm and headed toward my vehicle. I was pinned between my vehicle and the bumper of the lady car I had discharged earlier. I told her I could not get back in the clinic because of the alarm system. She was high on drugs. She let me open my truck door. I got a prescription drug pad out wrote her a script for Oxycontin she left and I called 911. I was afraid for my life.

Another incident occurred in my clinic with another person seeking narcotics who became violent when he was told he would not get narcotics.

This week a patient who my nurse told we would not refill his meds because he hadn't been seen in a year threatened to harm her, her family, burn a cross in her yard and kill her.

Verbal, Physical, and emotional abuse occurs everyday in medicine. Statistics show the staggering numbers of the problem.

In the last 32 years, I have been hit, cussed out, pushed, shoved, and threatened to many times to count. I'm not including patients who have no control over their behaviors, developmentally disabled or psychiatric patients. I am talking about patients who come to be seen and don't get what they are looking for or are high on multiple substances.

I urge to keep Healthcare Workers safe by supporting this bill.

I strongly support this bill

LaDonna Maxwell, MS, APRN  
CEO Missouri River Healthcare