

ISSUE BRIEF

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PREVENT HEALTH CARE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE



ACTION REQUESTED

Cosponsor the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act (H.R. 2663/S. 1176), and support passage of this legislation.



SOLUTION:

Cosponsor the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Services Workers Act (H.R. 2663/S. 1176)



ISSUE:

Workplace Violence Prevention Standards Are Needed for Health Care Settings

- Over 40% (80,600) of all ASHA members work in health care settings that include hospitals, residential facilities (e.g., skilled nursing facilities), and nonresidential settings including home health care.¹
- Audiologists and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) provide medically necessary hearing, balance, speech, language, swallowing, and cognition-related services to maximize health and functional outcomes and improve quality of life.
- According to a 2016 Government Accountability Office study, rates of violence against health care workers are up to 12 times higher than rates for the overall workforce, and 70% of nonfatal workplace assaults in 2016 occurred in the health care and social assistance sectors.²
- ASHA strongly supports ensuring appropriate and safe working environments for our members, including workspaces that ensure access and high-quality service delivery while upholding privacy standards.
- The Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act will help ensure that the health care settings in which audiologists and SLPs work have effective policies, training, and recordkeeping access in place to prevent violence and protect their health and safety.
- In the 117th Congress, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act by a bipartisan vote in April 2021.
- The House and Senate should pass this in the 118th Congress.

The Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act (H.R. 2663/S. 1176) would require the Secretary of Labor to issue an interim final standard on workplace violence prevention based on the Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Healthcare and Social Service Workers published by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in 2015.

¹ American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2022). *Profile of ASHA members and affiliates, year-end 2021*. www.asha.org.

² U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2016). *Workplace Safety and Health: Additional Efforts Needed to Help Protect Health Care Workers from Workplace Violence*. <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-16-11>.

