



UNAC/UHCP

United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals

UNAC/UHCP is affiliated with NUHHCE, AFSCME and the AFL-CIO



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June 13, 2012

**TO: Governor Jerry Brown
Members of the California Legislature**

RE: Proposal to Eviscerate Nurse Ratios in Hospitals

United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals (UNAC/UHCP), an affiliate of NUHHCE and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO, would like to inform you of our **adamant opposition to the proposal to eviscerate nurse ratios in California hospitals**. UNAC/UHCP represents 22,000 RNs, and Health Care Professionals in California.

UNAC/UHCP is adamantly opposed to the proposal to “suspend” nurse ratios during meal and rest breaks. This proposal effectively eviscerates the nurse ratios. Because of the nature of hospital work, nurses take meal and rest breaks continuously during each shift. “Suspending” the nurse ratios during meal and rest breaks means the ratios would never be in effect. Nurse ratios apply “at all times” and have applied “at all times” since the first ratios were instituted in intensive care units in California in 1975.

This is not a temporary act. It remains in effect as long as the budget cut to hospital Medi-Cal rates is in effect when there is no foreseeable prospect of undoing the budget cut, no matter what the voters do in November.

We opposed this in 2003 when the Schwarzenegger Administration jammed through phony emergency regulations to suspend the ratios during meal and rest periods. We opposed it when the state courts overruled the Schwarzenegger Administration’s action and found that no emergency existed. We oppose it now.

Should you have any questions regarding our position in this matter, please call us. UNAC/UHCP also reserves the right to change our position in the event of further amendments.

Sincerely,

Ken Dietz, RN
President, UNAC/UHCP

Barbara L. Blake, R.N.
State Secretary, UNAC/UHCP

cc: Jimmy Gomez, Political Director, UNAC/UHCP
Brooks Ellison, Ellison Wilson Advocacy, LLC
Beth Capell, Capell & Assoc.
Willie Pelote Jr., Political and Legislative Director, AFSCME Int.