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Nurses Condemn Governor's Veto of Mandatory Overtime Bill

Call on General Assembly Leadership to Override the Veto

June 29, 2007

Providence, RI ó Nurses today statewide expressed their outrage upon hearing the news that Governor Carcieri had vetoed a popular bill to end mandatory overtime in Rhode Island's hospitals.

“Yesterday, one day after his policy staff met with a group of ten nurses, our Governor shamefully vetoed our bill to end mandatory overtime for hospital workers,” said Rita Brennan, an RN from Memorial Hospital in Pawtucket.

“This means that according to our Governor, it is completely acceptable that hospitals continue to force nurses to work beyond their regular shifts, to put our patients in danger, and to drive more and more nurses out of our chosen profession,” she concluded.

“What could he be thinking?” asked Barbara Hunger, an RN from Women and Infants Hospital in Providence. “I can't understand this decision ó especially given the unanimous, bipartisan support for the bill in the General Assembly.”

“We only want the best care possible for our patients,” Hunger continued, “and we want to ensure that more nurses stay where they are needed long-term ó at the bedside. The Governor's support for the use of mandatory overtime hurts both of these goals.”

“We hope and expect that the House and Senate will quickly override his veto,” said Lynn Blais, RN at St. Joseph's ó Fatima Hospital in North Providence. “We have worked for over a decade to fix this issue ó and we are not turning back. The patients we care for every day deserve better.”

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