

## Adams, Courtney Lead Bipartisan Lawmakers in Curbing Violence Against Health Care and Social Service Workers



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Hello Sarah,

## Adams, Courtney Lead Bipartisan Lawmakers in Curbing Violence Against Health Care and Social Service Workers

WASHINGTON, DC—Today, **Congresswoman Alma Adams (NC-12)**, ranking member of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, **Congressman Joe Courtney (CT-02)**, a senior member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, and **Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)** a senior member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, re-introduced bipartisan, bicameral legislation to curb the rising rates of workplace violence facing health care and social service workers, including nurses, emergency responders, medical assistants, physicians, and social workers.

Health care and social service workers continue to [face the highest rates](#) of injuries caused by workplace violence of any industry. Health care workers make up for more than [three quarters](#) of all workplace violence nationwide, and are [almost four times](#) more likely to suffer a serious injury from workplace violence than workers in any other workplace setting.

The [Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act](#) compels the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to do what employees, safety experts, and Members of Congress have been calling for for years – develop an enforceable standard to ensure that employers are creating safe workplaces that their employees deserve, sooner rather than later.

"Health care and social service workers serve people from all walks of life. Unfortunately, they also face disproportionate rates of workplace violence," said House Workforce Protections Subcommittee Ranking Member Alma Adams. "The Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act sends the message that 'enough is enough' — setting a national standard that forces employers to take seriously the health and safety of American workers, especially those working on the front lines to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. I am proud to stand with Rep. Courtney and our bipartisan cosponsors in support of this legislation."

[To read a fact sheet and section-by-section summary of the bill, click here.](#)

"No worker—especially those we rely on for care—should be injured or killed on the job. Unfortunately, this workforce endures more violence than any other workforce in America, and rates are rising as employers struggle to fill vacancies in needed health care sectors. If we want to fill vacancies and retain workers, then we must protect workers on the job," **said Rep. Joe Courtney**. "This legislation would put proven tactics into practice in hospitals and health care settings across the country to prevent violence before it happens. I'm grateful for the bipartisan coalition— backed by the support of the workers directly affected by this violence—who has worked tirelessly to move this legislation forward."

"Our health care and social service workers deserve to work in a safe environment free from violence," **said Senator Tammy Baldwin**. "It is unacceptable that our health care workers are subjected to senseless acts of violence in their workplace, and we must do more to protect them. I am proud to introduce this legislation to give our nurses, doctors, health care support staff, and social service professionals on the frontlines work with long-overdue basic protections, helping address our health care workforce shortage and keep our frontline heroes safe."

The bill is supported by a bipartisan coalition of lawmakers, including **Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA-03)**, Ranking Member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, **Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE-02)**, **Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01)**, and **Rep. Jeff Van Drew (R-NJ-02)**.

"Health care and social service workers are routinely subjected to threats, assaults, and injury from foreseeable and preventable acts of workplace violence at rates that significantly exceed all other

professions,” **said House Education and the Workforce Committee Ranking Member Bobby Scott.** “This bill strengthens protections for these critical workers by requiring that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration issue an enforceable standard within 42 months of enactment that ensures employers adopt plans to address preventable acts of workplace violence. I am grateful to Rep. Courtney for his leadership on this bill and am continued commitment to the safety of our health and social service workers.”

“Our health care and social workers deserve to be protected from workplace violence,” **said Rep. Don Bacon.** “It is my hope that the Department of Labor will take steps to ensure that these workers are safe to continue their vital work. They have stepped up to care for others, and we must have their backs.”

“Our frontline healthcare and social workers continually put patients’ well-being’s ahead of their own, and stronger workplace protections for them are far overdue,” **said Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick.** “I am proud to join my colleagues in leading the bipartisan *Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act* to protect our health care heroes.”

The bill has received support from a host of health care and social service professionals, as well as unions representing workers in these sectors, including:

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses; American Psychiatric Association; AFGE; AFL-CIO; AFSCME; AFT; American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work; American College of Emergency Physicians; American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine; American Industrial Hygiene Association; American Nephrology Nurses Association; American Nurses Association; American Public Health Association; American Speech-Language-Hearing Association; Coalition of Labor Union Women; Emergency Nurses Association; IAM; National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians; National Association of Social Workers; National Nurses United; PhilaPOSH; USW.

**Congresswoman Alma Adams** represents North Carolina’s 12th Congressional District (Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, Cabarrus County). She serves on the House Education and the Workforce Committee as Ranking Member of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee, and on the House Agriculture Committee. She was first elected to Congress and took office in 2014, and is the longest serving member of North Carolina’s Congressional Democrats.

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