



From NFDW President Cindy Jenks

December 5, 2019

As this year comes to an end, important issues need our attention:

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed H.R. 1309, the *Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act*. This legislation will provide protections for caregivers like nurses and social workers.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides no enforceable standards that would require employers to implement a workplace violence prevention program for health care and social services workers. Employees in these industries are four times as likely to experience workplace violence, and that number is even worse for public employees in the field. Over the last ten years, workplace violence incidents for the health care and social service sectors have increased by 69 percent. In hospitals, violence grew by 123 percent, and in psychiatric settings, by 201 percent. H.R. 1309 represents a critical step forward by requiring OSHA to develop workplace violence prevention programs, and provides other vital protections for our nation's caregivers.

We owe a great debt to health care and social service workers. And like all Americans, they are entitled to a safe and dignified workplace environment. Check to see how your Representative voted on H.R. 1309 by visiting www.congress.gov. If your representative voted "Yes," email or call with a note of thanks. Also important: If you find a "No" vote, ask why. Then contact your Senators and ask for their support.

Secondly, we are researching the process for federal workers to have a trial by a federal jury. If you know someone who has experienced this issue, ask him or her to email Gail Buckner gailbuckner@bellsouth.net.