

Thank you, Chair Donate and committee members. My name is Caitlin Gatchalian, and I am the Chair of AAPI Democrats, here in strong support of SB 182.

The AAPI Democratic Caucus is dedicated to maximizing the participation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders as a powerful force in the political process. Recognizing the rich diversity within our community, we strive to strengthen our political engagement and leverage our collective power to create lasting change.

AAPI nurses, particularly those from our Filipino community, have been on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, making immense sacrifices. In 2020, Filipinos accounted for only 4% of the country's healthcare workforce but tragically made up nearly 30% of all COVID-19-related nursing deaths, according to the National Institutes of Health. Now, with over 200,000 Filipinos in Nevada—comprising more than half of the state's Asian population—it is critical that we advocate for policies that protect our healthcare workers.

Practicing and non-practicing nurses across Nevada overwhelmingly support safe staffing ratios. Nevada's hospital systems have the resources to retain nurses and provide safe staffing conditions that protect both healthcare workers and patients. SB 182 ensures that hospital staff, including the AAPI workers who are overrepresented in technical and service roles, have a voice in decision-making processes that directly impact patient care.

Furthermore, SB 182 mandates transparent staffing reports and safe nurse-to-patient ratios, addressing disparities in healthcare access and quality—issues that disproportionately affect AAPI communities in Nevada.

Let's be clear: claims that this bill would worsen the nursing shortage are misleading. Nurses are leaving the profession due to burnout and unsafe working conditions. SB 182 is a necessary step toward making the profession sustainable again by ensuring manageable workloads and a safer work environment.

AAPI healthcare workers have given so much to Nevada's healthcare system. It's time we give back by ensuring they have the staffing support they need. I urge the committee to pass SB 182.

Thank you.