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December 17, 2019

Howard Zucker, M.D., Commissioner
New York State Department of Health
Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Commissioner Zucker:

We write to you to express our strong support for the consideration of minimum statewide staffing ratios for nursing homes and hospitals for healthcare workers as part of the Department of Health's current statewide study on healthcare staffing. As part of your current study to understand the magnitude and nature of staffing problems in our state and to propose appropriate responses, we believe staffing ratios should be considered as a primary solution to this problem.

As you know, Part KK of Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2019 requires the Department to study how "staffing enhancements and other initiatives could be used to improve patient safety and the quality of healthcare service delivery in hospitals and nursing homes." These provisions explicitly requires the Department to consider minimum staffing levels and other staffing enhancement strategies as part of a review to support patient quality improvements.

Study after study has shown that inadequate staffing in healthcare leads to increased falls, risks of infection, readmissions, and even death. Minimum staffing ratios could help reduce injury and illness risk for healthcare workers and patients alike, improving quality care and decreasing costs associated with readmission or further illness.

Furthermore, staffing ratios are a well-tested way in which the state can regulate quality of services, as currently occurs in minimum caregiver-child ratios in daycare.

It is critically important that New York State acts on behalf of patients and families to raise the standard of care and safety in our hospitals and nursing homes. We urge you to take this timely opportunity as required by Chapter 57 to review the evidence that staffing ratios improve quality care, and to determine how best to improve patient care by raising the bar for staffing levels in our healthcare facilities.

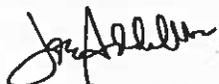
Sincerely,



Brad Hoylman
27th Senate District



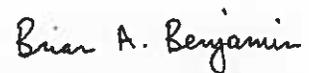
Gustavo Rivera
33rd Senate District



Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.
15th Senate District



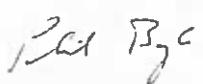
Jamaal T. Bailey
36th Senate District



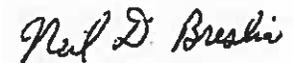
Brian A. Benjamin
30th Senate District



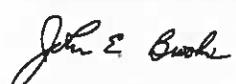
Alessandra Biaggi
34th Senate District



Phil Boyle
4th Senate District



Neil D. Breslin
44th Senate District



John E. Brooks
8th Senate District



David Carlucci
38th Senate District



Leroy Comrie
14th Senate District



Simcha Felder
17th Senate District



James F. Gaughran
5th Senate District



Andrew Gounardes
22nd Senate District



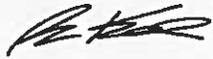
Pete Harckham
40th Senate District



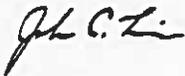
Robert Jackson
31st Senate District



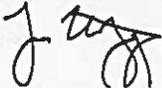
Anna M. Kaplan
7th Senate District



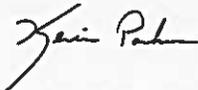
Brian Kavanagh
26th Senate District



John C. Liu
11th Senate District



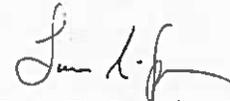
Jen Metzger
42nd Senate District



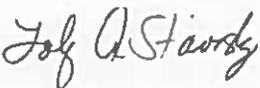
Kevin S. Parker
21st Senate District



Julia Salazar
18th Senate District



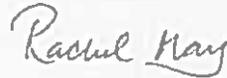
Luis R. Sepúlveda
32nd Senate District



Toby Ann Stavisky
16th Senate District



Timothy M. Kennedy
63rd Senate District



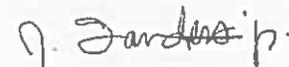
Rachel May
53rd Senate District



Velmanette Montgomery
25th Senate District



Roxanne J. Persaud
19th Senate District



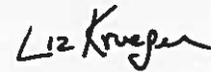
James Sanders Jr.
10th Senate District



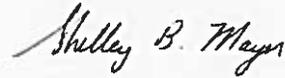
José M. Serrano
16th Senate District



Kevin Thomas
6th Senate District



Liz Krueger
28th Senate District



Shelley B. Mayer
37th Senate District



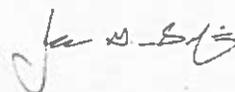
Zellnor Myrie
20th Senate District



Jessica Ramos
13th Senate District



Diane J. Savino
23th Senate District



James Skoufis
39th Senate District