

**Associated Industries of Massachusetts
Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce
Massachusetts Business Roundtable
Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation**

May 22, 2006

To: Members of the Massachusetts House of Representatives

Re: **Business Community Opposition to H.4965**

Dear Representative:

Associated Industries of Massachusetts, the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Massachusetts Business Roundtable and the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation oppose H.4965, which would require the Department of Public Health to establish specific nurse staffing ratios for the Commonwealth's hospitals. The employer community urges the House to refrain from micro-managing hospitals by mandating staffing levels either through General Law, or, by extension, through state regulation.

In the past, we opposed this legislation from a strongly held belief that codifying staffing levels for any entity within Massachusetts General Law is ill advised, counterproductive and costly.

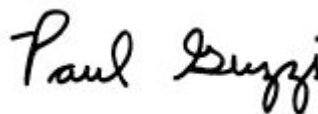
Appreciating the argument that appropriate staffing levels lead to better patient care and cost effective outcomes, we also understand that the complexity of determining the appropriate nurse staffing level for any health care institution involves myriad factors and expert judgment that cannot be adequately reduced to regulation. The bill before you, while avoiding the use of general law as a vehicle for codifying staff levels, suggests that determining safe staffing levels be left to the department of public health. We believe that the most appropriate entities with the knowledge, skill and experience to make those staffing decisions are hospital managers responsible for providing competent care, not state regulators.

Having recently passed a landmark health insurance reform bill, members of the House surely realize that the issue of adequate health care coverage is a complex and costly one. We urge you to reject H.4965.

Sincerely,



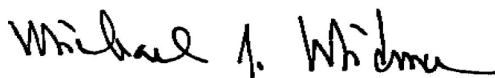
Richard C. Lord
President and CEO
Associated Industries of Massachusetts



Paul Guzzi
President and CEO
Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce



Alan G. Macdonald
Executive Director
Massachusetts Business Roundtable



Michael J. Widmer
President
Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, Inc.