



The League of Women Voters of New York State
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207
Phone: 518-465-4162 Fax: 518-465-0812
www.lwvny.org E-Mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS**
of New York State

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF:
A. 8580 (Gunther)

TO: Assembly Health Committee

DATE: January 20, 2016

SUBJECT: *An act to amend the public health law, in relation to nursing home and hospital nurse staffing patterns. This bill would create the "safe staffing for quality care act".*

The League of Women Voters of New York State (LWVNYS) supports legislation that enacts the "safe staffing for quality care act" to require acute-care facilities and nursing homes to implement certain direct-care nurse to patient ratios in all nursing units; sets minimum staffing requirements, requires every such facility to submit a documented staffing plan to the department on an annual basis and upon application for an operating certificate; requires acute-care facilities to maintain staffing records during all shifts; authorizes nurses to refuse work assignments if the assignment exceeds the nurse's abilities or if minimum staffing is not present; requires public access to documented staffing plans; imposes civil penalties for violations of such provisions; establishes private right of action for nurses discriminated against for refusing any illegal work assignment.

The League of Women Voters of New York State supports the above-referenced legislation as it is an amendment to the public health law already in place. This new legislation provides for better patient outcomes because of increased patient safety. It provides for lower costs for hospital and nursing home facilities as there will be lower rates of incidents; thus lowering medical malpractice incidents.

The League's position on health care is that it be accessible, affordable, and of sufficient quality to provide for better patient outcomes.

For the above reasons, the League of Women Voters of New York State strongly supports the passage of A.8580.