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## **There can be no “moratorium” on fixing dangerously understaffed hospitals, say DC’s nurses**

*For Immediate Release*

WASHINGTON, DC-- The District of Columbia’s nurses strongly reacted to the statement this week by District Council Chairman Phil Mendelson that he will put a two-year “moratorium” on bills coming before the Council that regulate the District’s businesses, including legislation that would mandate minimum nurse-to-patient ratios in DC hospitals.

“The registered nurses of the District of Columbia will never stop our advocacy on behalf of our patients, especially the necessity to ensure safe staffing in the city’s hospitals,” said LaKisha Little-Small, RN, a neo-natal intensive care nurse at Children’s National Medical Center and president of the District of Columbia Nurses Association, an affiliate of National Nurses United (NNU). “We expect the elected officials of this city to step up and do their jobs and protect the health and safety of everyone who seeks care in our city’s hospitals.”

“We cannot and will not accept a ‘moratorium’ by elected leaders on ensuring safe care for our patients,” added Stephanie Sims, RN, a neo-natal intensive care nurse and NNU chief shop steward at MedStar Washington Hospital Center. “We appreciate Chairman Mendelson’s sponsorship of our safe patient care bill and we expect the Council to take the bill seriously and pass it into law so that hospital patients stop being put at risk by irresponsible hospital executives. Rest assured: there will be no ‘moratorium’ on our demands for safe patient care in our hospitals and it is absolutely unacceptable for any elected official to abdicate his or her responsibility to fix the problem of understaffing in our hospitals.”

National Nurses United is the largest union and professional association of registered nurses in the United States and represents 4,400 RNs working in the District of Columbia with its affiliate, the DC Nurses Association.