



Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce Letter of Support for SB 403

January 10, 2024

Senator Regina Birdsell, Chair  
Health & Human Services Committee  
LOB Room 101  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Chairman Birdsell and HHS Committee members:

My name is Wendy Hunt, President & CEO of the Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce.

The Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce represents over 440 business members, large, small, private and nonprofit, of all sectors, including manufacturing, retail, hospitality, health care, education and so forth -- as well as the thousands of NH residents that they employ.

The City of Nashua has the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest population in the state and is home to some of the state's largest hospitals (St. Joseph Hospital, Southern NH Health), healthcare providers (Dartmouth Health, Lamprey Health) the Greater Nashua Mental Health Center, and Harbor Care (providing services in the areas of healthcare, addiction, mental health, veterans, homeless outreach and more).

The Chamber consistently hears from our healthcare members that staffing shortages in all departments are at a critical point, and they are in desperate need of help from business leaders and our state legislators to help them find a solution to develop a healthcare pipeline of talent.

On behalf of the Greater Nashua healthcare community, I am here today in support of SB 403, which would help address the state's critical healthcare workforce shortage for the following reasons:

- SB 403 is an excellent tool to address the critical workforce shortage in healthcare NH faces.

- The ongoing healthcare workforce shortage is a serious cost driver for the health care industry with higher wages, recruitment costs, and inflated labor costs necessitated by using contract workers in all positions.
- Higher health care costs impact all sectors of our business community.
- Downshifting higher cost to employers who sponsor insurance reduces the ability to increase wages.
- Higher cost for employees due to insurance increase, higher co-pays and deductibles affects dollars that are available to spend in other business sectors such as retail and hospitality.
- Delayed care due to lack of timely access because of staff shortages can increase employee stress, and ultimately optimal health. And we know, the best workforce is a healthy workforce!
- No single approach is a panacea to fixing New Hampshire's workforce shortage, but SB 403 moves toward developing a robust pipeline to attract and retain workers in New Hampshire.

For the health and well-being of New Hampshire residents and economy, we urge our NH lawmakers to support SB 403.



Wendy Hunt, President & CEO  
Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce  
60 Main Street, Suite 200  
Nashua, NH 03060  
603.881.8333 [whunt@nashuachamber.com](mailto:whunt@nashuachamber.com)