



Safety from Violence for Healthcare Employees (SAVE) Act (H.R. 7961)

Workplace violence for healthcare workers has been slowly increasing, especially over the last two years. In early June, an orthopaedic surgeon was tragically killed while in the hospital by a patient. The Safety from Violence for Healthcare Employees (SAVE) Act, H.R. 7961, would establish legal penalties for assaulting or intimidating hospital employees. The penalties are modeled after current protections for aircraft and airport workers. These enhanced penalties are intended to deter an uptick in violence and threats seen across the country.

In particular, the SAVE Act would:

- Establish federal, criminal penalties for those who knowingly assault and intimidate hospital employees. The bill includes enhanced penalties for the use of a dangerous weapon that results in injury and acts committed during a public emergency, as well as exceptions for individuals who may be mentally incapacitated due to illness or substance use.
- Authorize \$25 million in grant funding over 10 years to reduce violence and intimidation in hospitals. Funds may be used for training, law enforcement coordination, and technology.

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Physicians and other health care workers have sustained significant harm during the pandemic, and this stress is significantly magnified when the patients they treat respond in an inappropriate and aggressive manner. Many have left the profession leaving staffing shortages across the country. Health care workers must be protected from violence to ensure adequate access for Americans to continue to receive care in their communities.

Why This Legislation Matters

Threats of workplace violence or actual violence against health care workers can make it difficult for physicians to continue to provide quality patient care. These interactions can tie up valuable resources and delay the care patients may urgently need.

AAOS Recommends

Provide the protection necessary for our health care workforce by supporting the SAVE Act (H.R. 7961) and introducing a companion bill in the Senate.