

March 6, 2026

Senator Luke A. Rankin
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
101 Gressette Bldg.
Columbia 29201

Dear Chairman Rankin:

On behalf of the South Carolina Physician Alliance (SCPA), which represents physicians from across South Carolina, I write to express our support for House Bill 4763/ Senate Bill 175. This Bill, "Helping Alleviate Lawful Obstruction (HALO) Act", would be a much needed first step in addressing the growing and persistent problem of workplace violence in our hospitals and other healthcare facilities.

Healthcare Workplace Violence in South Carolina and Nationally

Violence against healthcare workers is a growing and ever-present problem. It affects healthcare workers regardless of their job title, shift schedule, or location within the state or the healthcare facility.

- According to our 2024 Workplace Violence Collaborative Report **at least 7** workplace violence incidents occur in South Carolina hospitals every day.
- Nationally, healthcare workers are **5 times more likely** to be assaulted than employees in other industries.

How HALO Would Work

The HALO Act would be a preventative measure that healthcare workers could use to preemptively diffuse a potentially violent situation.

- To trigger the HALO protections a healthcare worker must give an individual a verbal warning.
- The warning would be to step back to an area no more than 25 feet away. This space is what is necessary for the healthcare worker to provide safe and unencumbered medical care.
- If the warning is ignored and the individual interferes with medical care a misdemeanor charge can be given.

The Benefits of HALO in Health Care Facilities

Hospitals and healthcare facilities are spaces where sometimes minutes and even seconds can be the difference between life and death. Any time a healthcare worker must

spend trying to get the space necessary to work freely and safely is time they are not dedicating to patient care.

The ability to request the space needed to provide medical care and having a refusal to honor the request be a misdemeanor charge gives healthcare facilities a deterrent tool they can use when necessary.

Conclusion and Call to Action

We strongly and wholeheartedly ask you to **Vote Yes** on House Bill 4763/ Senate Bill 175
Doing so will:

- Show healthcare workers that they are valued and respected.
- Improve the sometimes dangerous environments in healthcare facilities.
- Allow healthcare workers the space they need to provide safe and unencumbered patient care.

Brent M. Powers, MD, MBA, FACP, FACHE
President
South Carolina Physician Alliance

Brent M. Powers

Brent M. Powers (Mar 6, 2026 17:26:47 EST)

Matthew Johnson, MD, MBA
Chair of Physician Policy Council
South Carolina Physician Alliance

Matthew Johnson

Cc: Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee