

2025 House Bill no. 1341
Senate Judiciary Committee
Representative Larson, Chairman
March 11, 2025

Chairman Larson and Committee Members, my name is Brittney Blake, and I am Corporate Counsel of Altru Health System. Like other health systems across the country and state, Altru has experienced an increase in violence toward our staff since 2020. Altru stands in support of HB 1341 on behalf of our workforce and the dedicated employees who face violence by patients almost daily, and ask that you give this bill a **Do Pass** recommendation.

When violence occurs at Altru, our small legal and security teams work together to help to deescalate situations and call law enforcement when necessary. Altru utilizes the AVADE de-escalation tools to prioritize the safety of all employees and patients. Altru supports HB 1341 to deter patients from knowingly harming or attempting to harm our employees. HB 1341 will act as another tool in our toolbox to deescalate patient violence.

Prior to coming to Altru, I was a prosecutor in Grand Forks County. I prosecuted both criminal and civil cases, including civil commitments of patients at Altru. I am well aware of the incidents of violence involving patients experiencing mental health or chemical dependency crisis, as well as patients becoming agitated or violent due to dementia or a diabetic episode. Those are not the incidents of violence we are addressing through HB 1341. Altru stands to share that there are patients, especially since the pandemic, who knowingly assault our employees.

We stand in support of this bill, as a clear message to health care workers at our organization, that we are committed to protecting our employees and students from violence within our buildings.

Respectfully,

Brittney Blake, Corporate Counsel

Altru Health System