PETITION: STOP THE STICKS

PROPERLY ENFORCE THE NEEDLESTICK SAFETY AND PREVENTION ACT NOW

385,000 Needlestick Injuries a Year Is Not a Statistic — It Is a Failure. Nurses Are Paying for It With Their Physical and Emotional Health.

To: The President of the United States; the Leadership of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives; and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), U.S. Department of Labor

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A Law on the Books Is Not a Law That Is Kept

WHEREAS, Congress passed the Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act more than two decades ago, in November 2000, promising nurses and healthcare workers that they would no longer have to risk their health and their lives to do their jobs — **a promise that, today, is being broken;**

WHEREAS, the CDC estimates that 385,000 needlestick injuries strike hospital-based healthcare personnel every single year, that is more than **1,000 every single day** and nurses are struck more often than any other healthcare workers on the front lines;

WHEREAS, every one of those needlesticks carries the terrifying possibility of **HIV, Hepatitis B, or Hepatitis C** — a single moment of contact that can upend a nurse's health, career, and family. The overwhelming majority of these injuries are entirely preventable with safety-engineered devices that already exist and have been researched and funded by the government itself;

WHEREAS, nurses are being made to blame themselves for injuries that are not their fault. They are denied access to the very safety devices that the law requires, while regulators look the other way and employers continue purchasing the same outdated, ineffective sharps year after year;

WHEREAS, the law already requires employers to maintain sharps injury logs, to update Exposure Control Plans annually, and to actively solicit input from the frontline nurses who use these devices every day — **yet these requirements are being systematically ignored, unenforced, and unchecked in facilities across this country;**

WHEREAS far too many facilities continue to deploy sharps devices designed not to protect workers, but to protect manufacturers' bottom lines — devices with a documented history of failure, selected in deliberate disregard of nurse safety and in **violation of OSHA standards**. This conduct that is not merely negligent, but fraudulent and misleading;

WHEREAS, manufacturers who knowingly supply substandard safety devices while misrepresenting their protective value are getting away with putting nurses at risk, and the facilities that purchase them are complicit;

WHEREAS, after 26 years and an estimated **10 million needlestick injuries** since the law was signed, a safety law that is not enforced is not a safety law at all — it is empty paper, and every preventable needlestick is a failure of accountability, not an accident;

We Demand Action

We, the undersigned, are done waiting. We demand that the President, the United States Congress, and OSHA take immediate, forceful action:

PROPERLY ENFORCE THE LAW. America’s largest healthcare systems are ignoring the true intent of transparency laws. Because the cost of non-compliance is virtually zero, their defiance creates a ripple effect, signaling the rest of the industry that they can follow suit without consequence.

PROSECUTE NONCOMPLIANCE. Fines are not enough. Executives of major suppliers and healthcare facilities who knowingly continue the use of substandard, ineffective sharps devices — in reckless disregard of nurse safety and in violation of OSHA standards — must be held personally accountable, prosecuted, and imprisoned to the fullest extent of the law.

END THE SECRECY. Make OSHA enforcement activity, citations, and facility compliance rates public and permanently trackable, so nurses, patients, and the public know exactly which facilities are cutting corners with the lives of their workforce.

KEEP THE PROMISE. Declare, without qualification, that protecting nurses from preventable needlestick injuries is a national priority — and back that declaration with real, sustained, and unrelenting enforcement. Twenty-six years and 10 million injuries is long enough. It is time to enforce what Congress signed into law.

Every name below represents a nurse, a healthcare worker, or an advocate who refuses to accept that 385,000 preventable injuries a year is simply the cost of doing business — and who demands that those responsible finally face real consequences.

Submitted on behalf of nurses and healthcare workers by The Lawrence-McWhorter AIDS Foundation, together with the undersigned.

By signing below, I demand full and immediate enforcement of the Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act to protect nurses and healthcare workers from preventable, life-altering injuries.

Printed Name	Email	Signature	Date

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