



## **National Federation of Nurses to Wisconsin Lawmakers: STOP Anti-Union Legislation That Puts Patients' Lives in Jeopardy**

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MADISON, Wis., March 2, 2011—For the safety of nurses and their patients, National Federation of Nurses (NFN) pleads with lawmakers in Madison to defeat legislation that would strip public employees of their right to collectively bargain for fair and equitable workplace conditions.

“This is a matter of life or death. If nurses cannot come together for safe equipment and working conditions in hospitals and other settings, than we’re not only talking about nurses leaving the job and adding to the current shortage, we’re talking about patients’ lives at risk,” said Barbara Crane, RN, president of NFN.

Collectively bargaining is more than negotiations about wages and benefits, it allows nurses to advocate for protections that directly affect patient safety and care. This includes making sure nurses aren’t assigned to too many patients at once or forced to work long, overtime hours that lead to burnt out and make them unable to effectively do their jobs.

Representing the voice of nurses, NFN leaders boarded a bus to Madison and marched in solidarity with teachers, fire fighters, nurses and other public servants. Crane spoke to thousands gathered in the Capitol to say that in addition to crippling our health care system, this is an attack on workers’ rights, the middle class and our nation’s democratic principles that must stop now.

“We want to stand with our brothers and sisters for what we consider the genocide of the middle class of this country, and we’re not going to take it anymore!” Crane said. “As a nurse, I know what a code looks like, and a code red is happening at ground zero in Wisconsin, and it’s got to stop now!”

[Click here](#) to view an excerpt of Crane’s speech on Democracy Now!

Republican lawmakers contend that this legislation is necessary to reduce the state’s budget deficit. Realistic about the need to cut spending, public employees offered concessions in wage freezes and other measures to do their part in finding a solution.

“Workers came to the table ready to help but that wasn’t enough for Walker. He wants to take this opportunity to undo years of progress in the labor movement and put an end to unions for good,” said Crane. “What’s masked as an attempt to reduce the states’ budget deficits by conservative lawmakers is a clear political payback against union workers who have historically supported their Democratic opponents.”

Similar legislation is being discussed in Ohio. NFN member, the [Ohio Nurses Association](#), says one-third of its nurse membership would be directly affected. It would also indirectly affect all nurses who have benefited from the workplace standards created by nurses represented under collective bargaining agreements in the state.

"This legislation affects all workers. It is not Wisconsin's issue. This is the nation's issue and, if passed here, it will be the death of American workers' rights and voices everywhere. We must all come together now to kill this bill once and for all."

### **About National Federation of Nurses**

National Federation of Nurses (NFN) is a leading national labor union and collaborative voice for registered nurses, representing 71,000 nurses nationwide. Founded in 2008 to provide a unique, more inclusive option for nurses and model for national unions, NFN's work is driven by the priorities of its members—nurses associations and the individual nurses they represent. NFN takes action at the local, state and national level to improve working conditions for nurses and achieve better patient outcomes. The ultimate goal is to create a strong and stable nursing workforce, and, thereby, improve health care delivery in the United States.

For more information, visit [www.nfn.org/](http://www.nfn.org/) or [www.facebook.com/nfn.org](https://www.facebook.com/nfn.org).

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