WHEREAS, There has been a definite increase in workplace violence in the United States, including all health care settings, such as free-standing clinics, hospitals, long-term care facilities and community and home visit settings, and

WHEREAS, In 2010, the healthcare industry overall reported 600,000 workplace injuries, more than any other occupation. Workplace injuries cost the healthcare system $3.1 billion in 2011. Of all the health care professions, nurses and nursing assistants suffer the largest number and highest rate of incidence of workplace violence, and

WHEREAS, Patients and clients of healthcare workers are the source of more than one-half of workplace assaults, and

WHEREAS, Horizontal and vertical violence has increased in the workplace, and

WHEREAS, Domestic violence, child abuse and gang violence is happening more frequently in the health care environment, and

WHEREAS, Methods to prevent, de-escalate, and respond to violence are well documented in the medical and social science literature, and

WHEREAS, Precedence exists for legislative action to raise the penalties for violence against health care workers and to deter the occurrence of violence in health care settings, and

WHEREAS, Legal definitions of workplace violence against health care workers have been developed and been enacted into several States’ Laws, including Washington State, and

WHEREAS, To be effective, State Laws must require all health care facilities to develop and implement comprehensive workplace violence prevention plans including: ongoing safety and health training and education of all employees, sufficient onsite security and staffing, management commitment and employee involvement, worksite analysis, hazard prevention and control, and recordkeeping and program evaluation.
BE IT THEREFORE

RESOLVED, That WSNA develop communications and other strategies to increase awareness of RNs, managers, employers, policy makers and the public about workplace violence laws and the dangers of violence in all health care settings, and

RESOLVED, That WSNA support the efforts to assure compliance with existing laws and regulations including those that require front-line worker involvement in development, implementation and evaluation of workplace violence prevention plans, and

RESOLVED, That WSNA advocate for measures to prevent violence in healthcare settings including:
  • development of stronger workplace violence safety standards
  • additional Federal and State legislative and regulatory protections, and
  • encourage development of contract language to address violence in the workplace

Adopted by The WSNA General Assembly April 23, 2015