



New York State  
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES  
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# ***SUPPORT***

**June 23, 2010**  
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The New York State Public Employees Federation, representing 59,000 Professional, Scientific, and Technical workers of New York State, supports this legislation.

Each day, in healthcare facilities across the state, patients and caregivers are needlessly subjected to injury by manual patient lifting. Patient injuries that can result include fractures, bruises, and skin tears. For healthcare workers the risks consist of serious musculoskeletal injuries, particularly in the lower back. Aside from the physical toll of manual patient lifting, there is also a tremendous financial cost. These injuries produce added costs for the treatment of injures, increased personnel expenses to cover shifts for injured workers, and higher workers compensation premiums.

This bill would address the problems associated with manual patient lifting by creating a safe patient handling task force within the Department of Health. Safe patient handling refers to eliminating the hazards of manual lifting by transferring and repositioning patients with mechanical lifts and repositioning devices. The task force will develop a statewide policy and oversee the implementation of safe patient handling programs in all health care facilities across the state. In addition, each facility will be required to establish a safe patient handling committee that includes direct care workers to ensure the proper use of equipment based on patient needs and risks.

Facilities which have implemented safe patient handling programs have reported dramatic improvement in the rate of injuries, workers compensation as well as medical/indemnity costs, and absence due to injury.

For these reasons, the Public Employees Federation urges you to support this legislation.

For more information, please contact:

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