An Open Letter Support to the RNs of the New York State Nurses Association
From the Members of the Massachusetts Nurses Association
In Your Fight for Safe Staffing and Quality Patient Care

As more than 13,000 NYSNA RNs working in hospitals from Brooklyn to the Bronx prepare to strike for safe staffing ratios and a fair contract, the 23,000 members of the Massachusetts Nurses Association want you to know that we support your courageous stand for your patients, your community and the integrity of your nursing practice.

Your fight is our fight, because we all work in a health care environment increasingly dominated by corporate greed, where hospital executives refuse to provide us with the resources we need to fulfill our joint mission, which is to deliver safe, quality care to patients at the most vulnerable times of their lives.

We have watched your struggle and we have been appalled to read the literature being circulated by your employer, literature filled with lies and misinformation about the issue of safe RN staffing and its impact on the quality of patient care.

You need to know that this same literature and these same false claims were utilized by the industry here in Massachusetts, backed by a $30 million advertising campaign, to defeat our efforts on a ballot question to extend our successful implementation of staffing ratios in the ICU’s to all units of the hospitals, where every patient should be assured a safe standard of care.

Don’t be swayed by this propaganda. The industry will misrepresent facts, threaten our work colleagues as well as our patients to make sure the they continue to control the flow of money. Only you know what it is like to face a patient who is suffering and needs your care, when you are also expected to care for six, seven, eight or nine other patients at the same time.

These patients are our sisters, brothers, mothers, fathers and our children and they deserve the safe care you are fighting to provide.
As you make this stand for your patients, know that despite the false claims of hospital executives, the scientific research is clear and unequivocal: safe ratios and safe patient assignments improve patient care, reduce complications and yes, decrease the cost of care.

According to Matthew McHugh, a leading researcher on nursing and patient safety from the University of Pennsylvania, “The evidence on the relationship between nurse staffing and patient outcomes is one of the most robust in the health services literature.”

If and when you are forced to strike for safer patient care, know that you are not alone. There are thousands of nurses here in Massachusetts, and millions of nurses around the world watching and supporting your struggle.

More importantly, as your members were there for us in our fight for safe patient care, our members will be walking your strike lines because in every sense, when it comes to our patients and their safety this struggle, our struggle, is literally a matter of life and death.

In Solidarity,

_The 23,000 Registered Nurses and Health Professionals of the Massachusetts Nurses Association_