



# Nurses • Midwives • Mental Health Nurses Respect our work.

## To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria

This Petition of residents of Victoria draws to the attention of the House the ongoing dispute between the Baillieu Government and Victorian public sector nurses and midwives, in respect to standards of care in our hospitals.

The introduction of nurse patient ratios in 2000 has resulted in better patient care and the return of thousands of experienced nurses who left the profession between 1993 and 1999 when workloads were unregulated and unsafe.

Nurse/midwife patient ratios guarantee a safe level of care for Victorian patients and protect Victorian hospitals' nursing budgets at a time when admissions are rapidly increasing. In addition nurse/midwife patient ratios make sure Victorian patients are cared for by qualified registered and enrolled nurses and midwives.

The negotiating position of the Baillieu Government has been to end nurse/midwife patient ratios in any replacement agreement by introducing unlimited short shifts, split shifts and by replacing qualified nurses with cheaper, less qualified health assistants (as part of ratios). This action will erode the quality of patient care and, as was the case in the 1990s, nurses and midwives will be unable to provide safe patient care and will leave the public hospital system.

The public hospital system in Victoria is operating under increasing pressure, and on any given day there are hundreds of beds closed as a direct result of underfunding and budget cuts. Despite promising Victorians 800 extra hospital beds in its first term, the Baillieu Government has not opened a single new bed. Opening those promised beds requires more qualified nurses and midwives not less.

The ANF is calling for the maintenance of and improvement to nurse/midwife patient ratios in some areas such as emergency departments, midwifery, theatre, rehabilitation, palliative and aged care and for their extension to new areas such as oncology, day procedure and renal dialysis.

### The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria call on the Baillieu Government to:

1. Resolve the nurses' dispute and support and fund nurse/midwife patient ratios in the replacement enterprise agreement.
2. Legislate for mandated, safe nurse/midwife patient ratios and cease pursuing the replacement of qualified nurses with unqualified and unregistered health assistants, four-hour shifts and split shifts.

Name	Address	Signature
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		