

**Justin Giebel, Registered Nurse  
Trauma Life Center at UW Health**

My name's Justin Giebel and I'm a registered nurse in the Trauma Life Center, which is the primary COVID intensive care unit at UW Health. I have been a nurse for three years, all here in Dane County. Thank you for giving me a few minutes tonight to speak in support of the Healthcare Workforce Trauma Recovery and Training Program. Thank you, Chairman Miles and members of the Executive Committee, for giving me a few minutes to speak tonight.

The shockwaves of COVID are still rippling through the hospital where I work and through all healthcare settings.

Our patients are so sick. Patients who were unable or too scared to seek medical care during the height of the pandemic are facing the consequences of delayed care. We are still clearing the surgery backlog. And some patients who recovered from COVID need extra care as they deal with the long-term impacts.

All the while, the healthcare workforce isn't keeping up with demand. People I've worked with choose to change units, employers, or careers. They go back to school or leave nursing.

But it's not about the workload alone.

Combative patients have become more common. People tell us the pandemic is a hoax, even as they test positive. They fight with their doctors because they think their Google search knows more. They assault hospital workers.

Our wounds from the pandemic have not healed. Putting on my personal protective equipment or returning to specific rooms stir memories of dying patients.

We love our jobs, but we need a light at the end of the tunnel. Our employers are not addressing these issues in a meaningful way, and that's why we need support from our community now. That's why we are specifically asking our county government to help.

I'd like to thank the Dane County Board of Supervisors for your service and your consideration. I know you have so many worthy causes before you. Thank you also to the Health & Human Needs Committee for your leadership and support of frontline healthcare workers.

Please support the 2023 budget proposal. Please create the Healthcare Workforce Trauma Recovery and Training Program, and please consider increasing funding to this critical program.