

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 5



City and County of San Francisco

DEAN PRESTON

October 18, 2023

Jia F. Li, Director
Terri J. Sharp, Associate Director for Patient Care Services/Nurse Executive
VA San Francisco Medical Center
4150 Clement Street
San Francisco, CA 94121

Dear Ms. Li and Ms. Sharp:

Thank you to the entire team at the San Francisco VA Health Care System, especially during the pandemic, for providing exceptional care to San Francisco's veterans, their families, and caregivers. This work is essential and greatly appreciated.

I was concerned to hear reports that SFVA's executive leadership revoked the 72/80 alternative work schedule for inpatient and emergency department nurses without consulting with frontline nurses or their union, National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) Local 1. It is my understanding that this popular and strongly recommended schedule for nurses in 24 hr units is currently being used by more than 5,100 nurses at 57 VA Health Care Systems nationwide.

This rationale has been relayed to me as a financial decision, and is a product of a broader trend of privatization of public goods, including Veterans' healthcare. I am proud that for the first time in 89 years, the brave union nurses at SFVA are coming together to collectively advocate for better working conditions, which will benefit not only their own health, decrease burnout and turnover, but also improve the quality of care that their patients need and deserve.

My office urges SFVA executive leadership to work with the union in good faith, so that leadership, frontline nurses, and their union representatives can find a workable solution that addresses the SFVAs fiscal concerns while supporting the work/life balance for nurses.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dean Preston".

Dean Preston
Supervisor, District 5