

To the Honorable Members of the Vermont House of Representatives Committee,

My name is Emily Millman. I am a registered nurse employed in the Emergency Department of Northwestern Medical Center in Saint Albans, Vermont. I am here today to express my strong support for Proposal 3 and the right to collectively bargain in Vermont workplaces.

My personal involvement with union work began in fall 2024 when my nursing colleagues and I decided it was past time for nurses to be involved in the decision making process for our little community hospital. We learned that a union changes how decisions get made, and that by forming our union we could have a meaningful voice in the policies and procedures in our workplace—which is also the hospital in which many of us, our friends and our families receive care. In February 2025 we voted to form our Union, Northwestern Healthcare United, with the goal of providing exceptional care for our community.

Unions are essential because they ensure that the voices of those on the ground—the people who carry out the day-to-day work—are meaningfully included in the decision-making process. These individuals bring invaluable experience and insight that often gets overlooked when decisions are made solely by upper administration. For example: last summer the administration made a unilateral decision to decrease incentive pay—the method by which the hospital fills staffing holes when there are critical patient care needs not being met. With organization and by using our collective voice, we were able to work with NMC administration to reverse this unilateral decision, and we are now in the process of bargaining our first Union contract.

When union members and administration work collaboratively, they are able to cover more ground and address challenges more effectively. Partnership between leadership and labor fosters a stronger, more resilient work environment and ultimately leads to better outcomes for everyone involved.

Better decisions are made when the people responsible for implementing the decisions have had a hand in shaping them. By supporting unions, we're supporting a more democratic, inclusive, and thoughtful approach to how our workplaces are run.

I urge all of you to continue standing with working Vermonters by supporting policies that strengthen and protect the role of unions in our state. Please support Proposal 3 and workers' right to collectively bargain.

In Unity,

Emily Millman, BSN, RN

Fairfield, VT

Northwestern Healthcare United

