

RESOLUTION NO. _____(CM)

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE
SUPPORTING SAFE STAFFING LEVELS AT WATSONVILLE COMMUNITY
HOSPITAL**

WHEREAS, Watsonville Community Hospital has been an invaluable asset to the Pájaro Valley and surrounding communities, including the City of Watsonville for over 100 years; and

WHEREAS, for-profit, Halsen Healthcare LLC., purchased and has continued to own and operate the Hospital since 2019; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to provide Watsonville and its surrounding communities excellent care; and

WHEREAS, Halsen explicitly stated to members of the community in a public town hall in June 2019 that it would not lay off employees or reduce or eliminate any existing services, and that Halsen was fully funded to successfully operate Watsonville Community Hospital, yet immediately initiated layoffs, including two registered nurses, shortly after the novel Coronavirus global pandemic began to surge in California and our semi-rural community; and

WHEREAS, the basic principles of staffing in the acute care setting should be based on the patients' care needs, the severity of condition, services needed, and the complexity surrounding those services and NOT on impacts to revenue, particularly amid a deadly pandemic and alarming surge of COVID-19 patients and public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, quality of patient care is jeopardized because of staffing changes implemented in response to managed care and Halsen's failure to have an emergency

response plan, the highest precautionary level of personal protective equipment, and crucial registered nurse staffing in place both prior to and for months during the rise of COVID-19 positive patients in California and across Watsonville and its surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, to ensure the adequate protection of patients in acute care settings, it is essential that qualified registered nurses be accessible and available to meet the needs of patients; and

WHEREAS, nearly two decades of peer-reviewed research has demonstrated safe staffing standards and nurse-to-patient ratios ensure patient safety; and

WHEREAS, current health services research continues to demonstrate that higher numbers of registered nurses available to care for patients lead to better patient outcomes with less morbidity, mortality and fewer complications; and

WHEREAS, development and implementation of minimum nurse staffing standards for nursing services are essential to ensure that the classifications, skills, experiences and numbers of health care professionals providing direct patient care are sufficient to meet the needs of patients; and

WHEREAS, the State of California recognized that the most critical barrier to the health, welfare and safety of patients in acute care settings is the lack of a uniform, mandated safe staffing standard, based on individual patient acuity with minimum, numerical and specific direct care registered nurse-to-patient ratios with California Assembly Bill 394, signed into law by Governor Davis in 1999; and

WHEREAS, California Assembly Bill 394 clearly regulates the obligation of registered nurses to act in a manner that is consistent with maintaining patient and personal safety.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA, AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the City Council hereby urges Halsen Healthcare, or any future hospital management, to respect and adhere to California's nurse to patient acuity staffing ratios at Watsonville Community Hospital.

2. That the City Clerk is hereby directed to transmit a copy of this resolution to Halsen Healthcare LLC., or any future hospital management, and the Governor of the State of California, Gavin Newsom.
