

Hello, my name is Tim Lillard and I live in Milford.

Thank you for your time today.

I am not a nurse and I do not work in health care; I am a police officer. I found out about the Safe Patient Care Act as I tried to make sense of what happened to my wife, Ann, who died in a southeast Michigan hospital a year ago this month.

Last October, both Ann and I were diagnosed with Covid. Initially it was very mild. But I watched as Ann declined and required hospitalization. Over the course of the next three weeks, I watched her health go up and down. She had endless IVs and medications and eventually breathing and feeding tubes.

Then she developed pneumonia. I spent every day at her bedside, often for more than 12 hours at a time. I was very familiar with her care and observed how few nurses were working.

After what we thought was a turn for the better, Ann quickly declined again. We were told that she may not make it through the day. After updating my kids, I received a call that Ann's heart had stopped. They were able to get her back, but when I made it back to the ICU, I saw they were doing CPR. They were unable to revive her again. They pronounced her death around 12:30 p.m.

In the months since then, I've sought to understand what happened to Ann. I got her medical records and spoke to many healthcare professionals – nurses, doctors – and they all said the same thing: “she died of sepsis.”

I've learned that every year nearly 270,000 Americans die of sepsis. It is a largely avoidable medical condition that is treatable if caught early. But nurses need adequate time to catch subtle changes in patients.

It is my belief that had the nurses at the hospital been adequately staffed, these subtle changes in Ann's condition may have been caught and treated and Ann would be alive today.

I have made it my mission to support and spread the word about the Safe Patient Care Act. It's not the nurses' fault that the system is broken and they can't always provide the care that people need. I want my wife's death to mean something. To me, doing everything I can to support the Safe Patient Care Act is that opportunity.

Unless you've had a loved one go through this ordeal, you simply cannot understand the heartbreak we've endured. Please take action so that no other person or their family has to endure such a tragic loss. You can help make a difference in saving lives.

Thank you again for your time.