



District 5
Washington, D.C., Prince George's County,
and Montgomery County

March 27, 2022

Dear MNA District 5 Members,

This week on Friday, March 25, 2022, the nursing profession was deeply saddened with the news of RaDonda Vaught being convicted of reckless homicide and impaired adult abuse after a medication error occurred. The sentinel event occurred at Vanderbilt University Medical Center on December 26, 2017, after Vaught overrode the automated medication dispensing system and administered a fatal dose of Vecuronium instead of the ordered Versed.

On behalf of the Maryland Nurses Association's (MNA) District 5 Executive Board, we want all nurses to know we continue to support you in your nursing practice, advocate for the profession and promote a "Just Culture" in the nurses' work environment. Nurses are human and errors will continue to occur as nurses continue to face pressures, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, short staffing, and navigating a complex healthcare system. Quality systems are in place to investigate and rectify problems as they occur and convictions are not the answer to solve system problems.

The Executive Board of MNA D5 supports the [full statement](#) released on Friday by the American Nurses Association (ANA): "The criminalization of medical errors is unnerving, and this verdict sets into motion a dangerous precedent. There are more effective and just mechanisms to examine errors, establish system improvements and take corrective action. The non-intentional acts of Individual nurses like RaDonda Vaught should not be criminalized to ensure patient safety."

Nurses are resilient and always persevere, however as the largest healthcare profession we must advocate for the nursing profession just as we do for our patients. We need to trust our healthcare colleagues, unite, and show solidarity, maintaining the nursing profession's integrity.

As your President, I will continue to advocate for all of you and join coalitions with other nursing organizations to advance the nursing profession. Please reach out to the Board with comments or feedback at mna5info@gmail.com as we are here to support you. Thank you for all that you do for the nursing profession and our communities.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lou J. Bartolo".

Lou J. Bartolo, DNP(c), MSN, RN
President
Maryland Nurses Association, District 5