



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0334-2004, Version: *

Res. No. 334

Resolution calling upon the State Legislature to adopt A.8560-A/S.4713, which would establish a reporting system to monitor the supply and demand for registered professional nurses and establish minimum RN to patient ratios within a staffing system designed to promote quality health care.

By Council Members Quinn, Clarke, Oddo, Sears, Stewart, Vann, Palma, Addabbo, Avella, Barron, Brewer, Boyland, Fidler, Gerson, Lopez, Nelson, Perkins, Rivera, Seabrook, Weprin and Jackson

Whereas, New York State and the City continue to experience a severe shortage of registered professional nurses (RNs) due to a combination of the increased demand for health care services of an aging population, the aging of the current RN workforce and a lack of job satisfaction because of long hours and high stress associated with low staffing; and

Whereas, Approximately 37,852 RNs, or 22.9%, of the current workforce in New York State, said they plan on leaving the profession in the next 5 years, according to a recent survey of nurses conducted by the State Office of the Professions; and

Whereas, A study on nurse “burnout” published in the October 2002 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association asserts that “40% of hospital nurses have burnout levels that exceed norms for health care workers” and that “job dissatisfaction among hospital nurses is four times greater than the average for all U.S. workers;” and

Whereas, Moreover, the Joint Committee on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), states that low RN staff levels contribute to at least 24% of all patient injuries and preventable deaths; and

Whereas, Legislation which is currently before the New York State Legislature, seeks to improve the quality of patient care received in acute care facilities by increasing the number of hours of patient care delivered by RNs, as well as by ensuring an adequate supply of RNs; and

Whereas, A.8560-A/S.4713 would amend the State Labor Law to require that the State Labor Commissioner present an annual report to the legislature identifying various factors that have resulted in a nursing shortage in New York State and projecting supply and demand for RNs for the coming year; and

Whereas, The legislation would also amend the State Public Health Law to require acute care facilities to include a basic staffing plan when seeking an operating certificate, and make such plan available to the public; and

Whereas, A.8560-A/S.4713 would also require acute care facilities to report to the State Health Commissioner incidents of failure to staff according to the basic staffing plan, as well as incidents when emergency patients have to be diverted to other facilities due to insufficient RN staffing; and

Whereas, The legislation would also establish minimum nurse to patient ratios in the following service units: Critical Care, Emergency Departments, Perioperative Care, Maternal or Child Care, Medical/Surgical Care, Behavioral Care and Rehabilitative Care; and

Whereas, The legislation would create a nursing advisory committee to counsel the State Health Commissioner in relation to acuity systems, staffing plans and RN to patient ratios in service units not specified in the legislation; and

Whereas, Additionally, the legislation would provide the State Health Commissioner with the authority to establish safe staffing standards to reflect the personnel needed, beyond the minimum RN to patient ratios, to meet patient care needs, prevent adverse patient outcomes and minimize the amount of non-nursing tasks performed by licensed nurses; and

Whereas, A.8560-A/S.4713 would also require each acute care facility to establish a committee of RNs to assist in the development of the facility's basic staffing plan and nursing orientation plans; now, therefore, be it,

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the State Legislature to adopt A.8560-A/S.4713, which would establish a reporting system to monitor the supply and demand for registered

professional nurses and establish minimum RN to patient ratios within a staffing system designed to promote quality health care.

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LS #639
4/27/04