

Senate Workforce Development Committee

Senator Michael Wobbema, Chair

Comments in support of SB 2288 Relating to nursing program matching grants; and to provide an appropriation.

Submitted by Julie Traynor, RN, Director, Dakota Nursing Program Consortium on January 25, 2023, for consideration at hearing scheduled on January 26, 2023, at 0945.

Chair Wobbema and members of the Senate Workforce Development Committee:

My name is Julie Traynor, I am writing in support of SB 2288. I have been the director of the Dakota Nursing Program for the past 15 years. We are a consortium of four community college partners, Bismarck State College, Dakota College at Bottineau, Lake Region State College, and Williston State College. We currently have satellite locations in Tioga, Watford City, Hettinger, Minot, Garrison, Hazen, Harvey, Ashley, Jamestown, Valley City, Grand Forks, and Mayville. Many of our practical nursing (LPN) and RN graduates are living and working in North Dakota.

Several of the issues impacting our practical nursing and associate degree ND nursing programs financially are:

- Finding and retaining faculty who are willing to decrease the salary they earn in practice. Nurses who have an AD or BSN degree also must find the money to fund a graduate degree, so they are qualified to teach our future nurses.
- The technology used in simulation laboratories is expensive. We use simulation in both urban and rural areas, but it is particularly important in our rural areas where students do not have access to complex specialty patients.
- Our students must purchase uniforms, books, medical supplies, and educational resources such as access to online interactive materials, testing, proctoring, and virtual simulations that become more costly each year.

The nursing program matching grants appropriate can help to strengthen our nursing programs and provide financial support to our nursing students. We need diverse and innovative ways to solve our nursing shortage and the matching grant can be an effective part of that.

There are many intelligent and compassionate people who are interested in becoming nurses. It is one of the perks of my job to interact with them. I also work with nurse educators who are innovative, dedicated professionals, who take seriously their responsibility of graduating safe and effective nurses.

Please consider this solution as part of a big picture to assist those nursing students and nurse educators, and to strengthen the medical facilities with great nurses. I ask you to support SB 2288.

Your consideration of this matter is very much appreciated. Thank you for serving the great state of North Dakota in our legislature.

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