

February 10, 2014

Delivered via E-mail
House Health Care Committee
2015 Legislative Session

Chair Greenlick, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the House Health Care Committee,

I am writing to you in opposition to HB 2541. While you may recognize my name as the former director of the Department of Administrative Services and the Department of Consumer and Business Services, I am writing to you today as a volunteer member of the American Red Cross Northwest Region Advisory Board of Directors.

HB 2541 requires a physician, physician assistant, or an individual licensed to practice nursing to be present at every blood drive. The intent, likely, is to have nurses fill this role. This bill affects the operations of the American Red Cross in a negative way, increasing blood collection costs and disrupting volunteer services used to collect blood for regional hospitals and medical centers.

If this bill would have been in place last year, 12,240 fewer pints of blood would have been collected, as nurses were not available for the equivalent of 414 workdays. The American Red Cross relies heavily on volunteers who give their time and services to staff the blood drives. Last minute cancelations of blood drives, due to lack of licensed staff, severely impacts the morale and willingness to serve as a volunteer.

As an economist, it is not hard for me to see that we already have a nursing shortage in this country. Google the phrase "Nursing Shortage" and you will find innumerable articles on the subject. This bill further exasperates this issue. Here are some statistics from those articles:

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Projections 2012-2022 released in December 2013, Registered Nursing (RN) is listed among the top occupations in terms of job growth through 2022. The RN workforce is expected to grow from 2.71 million in 2012 to 3.24 million in 2022, an increase of 526,800 or 19%. **The Bureau also projects the need for 525,000 replacements nurses in the workforce bringing the total number of job openings for nurses due to growth and replacements to 1.05 million by 2022.** <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.t08.htm>
- According to the "United States Registered Nurse Workforce Report Card and Shortage Forecast" published in the January 2012 issue of the American Journal of Medical Quality, a shortage of registered nurses is projected to spread across the country between 2009 and 2030. **In this state-by-state analysis, the authors forecast the RN shortage to be most intense in the South and the West.** <http://ajm.sagepub.com>
- In the November 26, 2008 Journal of the American Medical Association, workforce analyst Dr. Peter Buerhaus stated: "Over the next 20 years, the average age of the RN will increase and the size of the workforce will plateau as large numbers of RNs retire. Because demand for RNs is expected to increase during this time, **a large and prolonged shortage of nurses is expected to hit the US in the latter half of the next decade.**"

Finally, the FDA works very closely with the American Red Cross on its collection practices. Federal oversight is already in place. This additional regulation will not make the blood supply safer than it already is. It will only make it more expensive and less available. I urge your no vote.

Sincerely,



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