



Oregon Nurses Association 2017 Legislative Priorities

HB 2862: Oregon Nurse Faculty Loan Repayment

Problem: In a 2016 report evaluating the demand for nursing professionals across all workforce sectors, the Oregon Center for Nursing (OCN) determined that the need for qualified registered nurses in Oregon is expected to increase substantially over the next decade. Specifically, the study found that the demand for active RNs in Oregon will increase by an estimated 1.9% annually from 2015 to 2025.¹ This projection reflects expected population growth as well as the increased care needs for our state's aging residents. OCN also indicates that if there is no growth in the supply of Oregon RNs, we can expect a considerable shortage as it relates to demand in the coming years- approximately 6,000 nurses in all settings by 2025.²

A key recommendation for meeting this challenge is to increase the capacity of nursing programs to produce new graduates able to enter the workforce.³ However, a 2010 OCN study also found that 37% of qualified nursing program applicants are currently excluded from Oregon's undergraduate programs due to an insufficient number of nurse faculty.⁴

Relatedly, a 2006 National League for Nursing Report found that one in four educators were likely to leave their positions as a result of low compensation,⁵ while up to 50% of nurse educators are expected to retire by 2025 in Oregon.⁶ Pay disparities for nursing faculty versus direct care nurses, coupled with the cost of obtaining an advanced education degree, remain significant barriers to both attracting and maintaining the faculty necessary to meet this demand.

Solution: In 2009 the Oregon Legislature created the Nurse Faculty Loan Repayment Program to help address this issue. Through a one-time allocation of \$200,000, seven nurse faculty members received funding to help offset costs associated with their education. This incentive program has been pivotal in retaining these educators and is a tool that 15 states now offer today as part of a national effort to stem this shortage.⁷

HB 2862 would allocate \$350,000 for the Faculty Loan Repayment program and provide funding for approximately 10 more faculty. This legislation represents a vital expansion of this program that remains an important tool for recruiting the educators required to keep pace with the rising need for qualified nursing care in Oregon.

The Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) is Oregon's oldest and largest professional association and labor union for Registered Nurses. ONA is proud to represent more than 14,000 Oregon nurses. ONA works to support policies that ensure the best working conditions for nurses, and the very best health care for the patients they serve.

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¹ Oregon Center for Nursing. (2016). The Demand for Nursing Professionals in Oregon. <http://oregoncenterfornursing.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2016-OCN-TheDemandforNursingProfessionals-Web-NEW.pdf>

² Oregon Center for Nursing. (2016). The Demand for Nursing Professionals in Oregon.

³ Oregon Center for Nursing. (2016). The Demand for Nursing Professionals in Oregon.

⁴ Oregon Center for Nursing. (2010). *Who Gets In? Year Two of the Nursing Student Admissions Database*. Portland, OR: Oregon Center for Nursing.

⁵ National League of Nursing. (February 2010). *2010 NLN Nurse Educator Shortage Fact Sheet*. <http://www.nln.org/docs/default-source/advocacy-public-policy/nurse-faculty-shortage-fact-sheet-pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=0>.

⁶ Oregon Center for Nursing. (2015). *Oregon's Nurse Faculty Workforce: 2014 Update*. Portland, OR: Oregon Center for Nursing. http://oregoncenterfornursing.org/wp-content/uploads/OCN_Publications/OCN_Nurse_Faculty_Workforce_20141.pdf

⁷ American Association of Colleges of Nursing. *State Policy Resources*. <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/state-advocacy/resources>