



March 1, 2023

Dear Legislative Members:

I am writing to express support for SB 523, Allowing Community Colleges to Confer BSN Degrees. As a community college graduate, these kinds of opportunities would have benefited me instead of traveling out of my community to complete a bachelor's degree. At the community college, I had a support system and relationships with my instructors, who continued to support me as I pursued my career and future degrees. Because of the community college experiences I had, I decided to teach at the community college to offer the same kind of support to students. I was not a student ID number but a person to my instructors at the community college.

We just lived through a pandemic, which illustrated the need for more individuals to pursue degrees in the medical field. By allowing the community college to offer the bachelor's degree in nursing, you are allowing students to stay in an environment where they are familiar with the instructors and resources. Additionally, the community college serves the community and has connections with the community organizations in which the students will complete clinicals and move into employment. Because of these community relationships, the nursing program can pivot to meet the needs of the community within the program. We must address the shortages in the field, and this is one way to open the door to more students and provide an equitable opportunity.

I ask that you knock down the barriers for students seeking the BSN degree by allowing the community college to offer this degree pathway. It is critical that we put students first and think about what is best for our community and the impact this would have on students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Batchelor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Melissa Batchelor