STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 48th Legislature (2002)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 2162 By: Paulk

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

An Act relating to professions and occupations; creating the Nursing Workforce Task Force; providing legislative findings; providing for duties; providing for appointment; providing for membership; providing for appointment of officers, meetings, vacancies and quorum; providing for reimbursement; requiring public input; requiring cooperation; requiring a final report; providing for termination; providing for codification; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 575 of Title 59, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The Oklahoma Legislature finds that:

1. In Oklahoma and across the nation, there are growing concerns about the increasing shortage of nurses;

2. Oklahoma lacks adequate and accurate data on the supply of nurses necessary to determine the extent of the shortage of nurses and to project future needs;

3. Employers are reporting shortages of nurses;

4. High school students are not choosing nursing as a career due to a wide range of employment options;

5. Approximately twenty-seven percent (27%) of the nurses in the United States are between the ages of forty-five (45) and fifty-four (54), and it is projected that over the next ten (10) years

forty percent (40%) of the registered nurse workforce will be older than fifty (50) years;

6. According to the Harvard Nursing Research Institute, nationally, nursing school enrollment dropped by twenty and nine-tenths percent (20.9%) from 1995 to 1998, while jobs are likely to expand by twenty-three percent (23%) between 1999 and 2006;

7. The insufficient number of nursing faculty has been identified as contributing to the nursing shortage;

8. Reductions in reimbursement rates from governmental payors and private insurers have made it difficult for many providers to maintain salary levels necessary to recruit and retain nurses; and

9. The quality of patient care in acute and in nonacute settings is dependent on maintaining an adequate supply of nurses in this state.

B. There is hereby established a Nursing Workforce Task Force to:

1. Identify strategies to enhance recruitment and retention of nurses into the workforce, especially in rural and inner-city areas;

2. Identify strategies to reverse the growing shortage of nurses, especially in rural and inner-city areas;

3. Identify strategies to increase the number of individuals choosing nursing as a career, including the creation and expansion of scholarships;

4. Identify strategies for the uniform collection of data from licensure boards to gauge workforce supply and employment needs and to plan for education and training, especially interdisciplinary education and service learning;

5. Identify strategies to upgrade the image of nursing and to eliminate barriers to mobility in education and career advancement;

6. Recommend potential changes in nursing curricula and ways to expand the use of technology to prepare the type of competently trained graduates required by employers;

7. Identify best practice retention models within the employment environment;

8. Identify strategies to assure governmental payors and private insurers adequately cover labor costs;

9. Identify the roles and responsibilities of private and public organizations in addressing nursing workforce shortage issues; and

10. Gather information on work completed by other groups, states, and the federal government related to the nursing workforce shortage.

C. The membership shall consist of the following members:

1. Two members of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker;

2. Two members of the Oklahoma State Senate, appointed by the President Pro Tempore;

3. Three members from the Oklahoma Nurses Association;

4. One member from the Oklahoma Hospital Association;

5. One member from the Physician Manpower Training Commission;

6. One member from the University of Oklahoma School of Nursing;

7. One member from the Oklahoma State University School of Nursing;

8. One member from the Oklahoma Board of Nursing and one member appointed by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing who shall be a licensed practical nurse;

9. One member from the State Board of Career and Technology Education;

10. The State Commissioner of Health or designee; and

11. Two members appointed by the Governor.

D. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint a chair from the legislative members and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint a vice-chair from the legislative members.

E. The Chair shall call the first meeting of the Task Force on or before September 1, 2002.

F. Vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority where such vacancy exists.

G. A majority of the members appointed to the Task Force shall constitute a quorum and a majority present at a meeting may act for the Task Force.

H. Legislative members shall be reimbursed pursuant to the provisions of Section 456 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes. Nonlegislative members shall be reimbursed by their appointing authority for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties pursuant to the provisions of the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

I. The Task Force may divide into subcommittees in furtherance of its purposes.

J. The Task Force shall actively seek and consider input from the public, the health care business community, long-term care organizations, organizations for elderly or retired persons, public interest organizations, professional organizations, or any other group or person who has an interest in the health care programs of this state and the work of the Task Force. The Task Force shall solicit and accept written comments, recommendations and proposals and shall hold public hearings to obtain comments from the public.

K. All departments, officers, agencies and employees of this state shall cooperate with the Task Force in carrying out its duties and responsibilities, including providing any information, records and reports as may be requested by the Task Force.

L. The Task Force shall submit a final report to the Governor, the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the State Senate no later than February 15, 2003, regarding the findings and recommendations of the Task Force.

M. The Task Force shall terminate on June 1, 2003.

SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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