

By Senator Dawson

30-1148-01

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to nursing and allied health
3 professions; providing legislative findings;
4 creating the Workforce Development Commission
5 on the Critical Shortage in Nursing and Allied
6 Health Professions within the Department of
7 Education; providing commission duties and
8 responsibilities; requiring a report to the
9 Governor and to legislative officials;
10 providing for commission membership,
11 organization, meetings, procedures, staff, and
12 reimbursement; providing an appropriation;
13 providing an effective date.

15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

17 Section 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

18 (1) This state is experiencing a nursing shortage that
19 could have serious consequences for the delivery of health
20 care in the state.

21 (2) The average age of registered nurses in this state
22 is 45 years. The number of nurses who retire each year is
23 increasing, while the number of new nursing graduates is
24 stable.

25 (3) As the baby boom population ages, the need for a
26 larger nursing workforce will increase dramatically.

27 (4) Waiting times for students who are interested in
28 enrolling in nursing programs are unacceptably long and are
29 not consistent with the needs of the state.

30 (5) The state may use alternative strategies such as
31 increasing full-time-equivalent-student funding, grants, and

1 loan-forgiveness programs; recruiting and funding efforts to
2 increase nursing and allied health program faculty to meet the
3 state's current and future needs for licensed nurses and
4 unlicensed allied health professionals; and encouraging
5 school-age children to enter nursing and allied health
6 professions.

7 Section 2. There is created within the Department of
8 Education the Workforce Development Commission on the Critical
9 Shortage in Nursing and Allied Health Professions.

10 (1) COMMISSION DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.--The
11 commission must examine alternative strategies and develop a
12 plan for:

13 (a) Significantly increasing the number of students
14 graduating from nursing programs and allied health programs in
15 order to meet the state's current and future needs for
16 licensed nursing and unlicensed allied health professionals,
17 including the economic implications of the state's failure to
18 do so.

19 (b) Providing specialty training to licensed nurses,
20 including, but not limited to, training in the nursing
21 specialty areas of critical-care, emergency, geriatric,
22 obstetric, pediatric, neonatal intensive-care, and
23 operating-room nursing.

24 (c) Recruiting and funding efforts to increase nursing
25 and allied health program faculty to meet the state's current
26 and future needs for licensed nursing and unlicensed allied
27 health personnel.

28 (d) Establishing mentoring programs for nursing and
29 allied health students.

30 (e) Encouraging school-aged children to consider
31 careers in nursing and allied health.

1 (2) REPORT OF FINDINGS.--The commission shall provide
2 a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor,
3 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
4 Representatives no later than February 1, 2002. In its report,
5 the commission shall address and make specific findings
6 regarding existing strategies for promoting an adequate
7 nursing workforce for the needs of the state and any economic
8 incentives for the promotion of this goal with industry
9 officials.

10 (3) MEMBERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, MEETINGS, PROCEDURES,
11 STAFF.--

12 (a) The Workforce Development Commission on the
13 Critical Shortage in Nursing and Allied Health Professions
14 shall consist of:

15 1. The Chancellor of the Board of Regents or his or
16 her designee, who shall chair the commission.

17 2. One representative from each of the following
18 agencies or organizations: postsecondary institutions under
19 the jurisdiction of the State Board of Nonpublic Career
20 Education, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the
21 State Board of Independent Colleges and Universities; the
22 Board of Nursing; the Department of Health; organizations
23 representing licensed nurses; organizations representing
24 hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other employers of
25 registered nurses and of unlicensed allied health personnel;
26 board-approved nursing programs; and other interested groups.

27 3. One registered nurse licensed in this state,
28 appointed by the Secretary of Health.

29 4. Two representatives from licensed schools who
30 provide postsecondary training of unlicensed allied health
31 professionals.

