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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 664

Offered January 10, 2001

Prefiled January 10, 2001

Requesting the Virginia Partnership for Nursing, in cooperation with various state agencies and other nursing and health care organizations, to conduct a study of education programs for registered nurses and licensed practical nurses in Virginia.

Patrons—Bryant, Brink and Morgan; Senator: Bolling

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Virginia Joint Commission on Health Care (JCHC) conducted a study of strategies to educate, train, recruit, and retain nurses pursuant to House Joint Resolution 288 and Senate Joint Resolution 228 of the 2000 Session of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, hospitals, long-term care facilities, home health providers, and physician offices report having serious difficulties recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified nurses; and

WHEREAS, the JCHC concluded that the hiring difficulties of health care employers will worsen in light of the fact that many researchers are projecting a significant shortage of nurses by 2008; and

WHEREAS, there are several factors believed to be driving the projected shortage, including: (i) expanded employment opportunities for women; (ii) increasing work pressures; (iii) decreasing nursing school enrollments and graduations; and (iv) an insufficient number of younger nurses entering the profession to replace those who will be retiring beginning in 2008; and

WHEREAS, admissions to education programs for registered nurses in Virginia have decreased 25 percent since 1993, and graduations have declined 20 percent since 1997; and

WHEREAS, admissions and graduations at Virginia's education programs for licensed practical nurses also have declined in recent years; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Employment Commission projects 19 percent employment growth for registered nurses and 25 percent employment growth for licensed practical nurses between 1996 and 2006; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to increase the number of qualified persons enrolling in and graduating from Virginia's nursing education programs in order to avert a critical shortage of nurses in the future; and

WHEREAS, further study is needed to determine what actions must be taken to ensure that Virginia's nursing education programs not only enroll and graduate more nurses but also provide nurses with the necessary skills and training to meet the increasingly acute level of care required by patients; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia Partnership for Nursing, in cooperation with the Virginia Nurses Association, the Virginia League for Nursing, the Virginia Association of Colleges of Nursing, the Virginia Council of Associate Degree Nurse Program Heads, the Virginia Health Occupations Education Association, the Assembly of Hospital Schools of Nursing in Virginia, the Virginia Organization of Nurse Executives, the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, the Virginia Health Care Association, the Virginia Association of Nonprofit Homes for the Aging, the Virginia Association for Home Care, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the Virginia Board of Nursing, and other appropriate entities, conduct a study of nursing education programs for registered nurses (RN) and licensed practical nurses (LPN) in Virginia.

The study shall include, but need not be limited to, an analysis of: (i) actions that are needed to increase the number of persons enrolling in and graduating from Virginia's RN and LPN nursing education programs; (ii) whether the capacity of Virginia's RN and LPN nursing education programs needs to be increased to meet future demands; (iii) actions that are needed to recruit and retain more nursing faculty; (iv) whether curriculum changes are needed to ensure that RN and LPN nursing education programs will meet future nurse workforce demands; (v) whether there needs to be a greater or lesser emphasis placed on certain types of RN degree programs; and (vi) other appropriate issues related to RN and LPN nursing education.

The Virginia Partnership for Nursing is requested to submit its findings and recommendations to the Joint Commission on Health Care by October 15, 2001, and to the Governor and the 2002 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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