



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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By

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SB 2274 SD1 – RELATING TO THE CENTER FOR NURSING

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity for the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing (NAWSON) to provide testimony in strong support for SB 2274 SD1 relating to the Center for Nursing.

This bill seeks to increase the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing (hereafter referred to as Center for Nursing) fee from \$40 to \$60 per license biennium and will require all nurse license applicants, in conjunction with license renewal, to respond to the nursing workforce supply survey. This bill proposes to make the nursing workforce supply survey required, so long as it does not also inhibit a nurse from serving as a nurse should they fail to respond to the survey.

The Center for Nursing is within NAWSON. As a longstanding effort to support the Center, UH and NAWSON provides funding, in-kind, including office space and technology support. In addition, the faculty and staff of the Center receive the benefits of being employed by the UH system including tuition support, library access, and retirement investment. These contributions have helped the center recruit and retain their high functioning team, and allocate their nurse workforce fees to direct support of the mandates that the legislature established in 2003.

Though “in” NAWSON, the Center for Nursing has sought to establish itself as an equal partner and advocate for nursing, and works closely with all schools of nursing as well as employer partners and healthcare associations and organizations, statewide. NAWSON is an active partner in many of the Center's programs including the Academic Progression in Nursing program, which helped the state become one of the most highly educated nursing workforces in the nation; the Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)

Program, which provides professional development for faculty in all local schools of nursing in how to teach EBP to students; and the Hawai'i Clinical Placement Collaborative, which has ensured that our students have access to high quality clinical placements as well as improving the clinical placement coordination process for O'ahu and Kaua'i.

As it relates to nursing workforce research, the ability to access from the Center for Nursing relevant, updated, and locally developed nursing education and nursing workforce data has enabled our school to apply for, and be granted funding from private and federal funding opportunities. It has also enabled us to respond to market needs as it relates to the volume of nursing student enrollment, as well as offering graduate programs that develop specialty nurses.

As important as nursing education is to NAWSON is nursing recruitment. We know that the success of our program, in part, is the ability for our graduates to become employed in Hawai'i. In 2012, the Center for Nursing founded the first statewide Nurse Residency Program Collaborative in the nation. Today, over 11 hospitals and healthcare facilities in our state are partners of this program, which means they have committed to not only hiring new graduate nurses, but also supporting them with evidence-based transition to practice support in their first year of working. In the decade this collaborative has existed, over 1,300 new graduates have been hired into new graduate residencies, leading to a 94-99% 12-month retention rate. Without this support, the national 12-month retention rate is 82%. The efforts of the Center for Nursing have helped our nurse graduates become hired by local employers and receive the support they need to stay not only in their job, but in their profession.

As the COVID Pandemic has impacted the nursing workforce, the Center for Nursing has been quick to respond. The Center for Nursing has maintained access to clinical education so that schools of nursing across the state can continue to provide nursing education, and as such, graduate qualified new nurses at a time when they are greatly needed. They have helped us connect with the Department of Health vaccine clinics, with COVID-testing sites, and to engage with new clinical partners. Their work and reach extend to nursing employers and professional organizations as well, providing strategy and planning that is truly statewide and across the continuum of nursing.

Your favorable support of this measure will help to maintain nursing academic enrollment at the numbers needed to sustain our in-state nursing workforce and support the development of innovative efforts related to the recruitment and retention of nurses.

The NAWSON urges you to pass this measure through your committee. Thank you for the dedication and care for nurses and the people in Hawai'i.