



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committees on Health and Intrastate Commerce
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by

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HB 1363 – RELATING TO NURSES

Chairs Mizuno and Ohno, Vice Chairs B. Kobayashi and D. Kobayashi, and members of the House Committees on Health and Intrastate Commerce:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments related to HB 1363 that aims to require state participation in the multi-state Nurse Licensure Compact.

The measure will allow a nurse who is licensed by a “home state” to practice under a multi-state licensure privilege in each compact state. This measure, if enacted, will enable nurses licensed in other states participating in the Nurse License Compact, to enter Hawai'i and practice nursing using their “home state” license.

We take no position on the current version of the bill but offer the following comments for your consideration:

- The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing's 2017 Nursing Workforce Supply Report, documents that our state nursing workforce is one of the most highly educated in the nation with 72% of nurses holding a bachelor's degree or higher whereas the national average is 54%. This high rate of baccalaureate nursing degree academic preparation is in response to the Institute of Medicine's call for at least 80% of all RNs to hold a bachelor's degree in nursing or higher as a benchmark to achieve a nursing workforce that is highly educated, embraces a culture of professional development and lifelong learning, and is well equipped to take care of the increasingly challenging healthcare needs of patients, and deliver care in an highly complex health care system.
- H.R.S. §457-9.2 and §457-9.3 requires continuing competency activities for nurses starting with the license period that begins in July 2017. This was the culmination of five years of work by the legislatively mandated Continuing

Education Joint Advisory Council that determined continuing competency should be a requirement for nursing license renewal. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of states that require continuing competency report holding lesser thresholds to meet their requirements than that of the Hawai'i Board of Nursing.

- In 2003, the Legislature passed H.B. 422 H.D. 2, S.D. 2, C.D. 1 which was passed into law with Act 198, SLH 2003 and established the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing. The Center is mandated to proactively address nursing workforce planning including assessments of the current nursing workforce supply (practicing nurses in Hawai'i) that is critical for healthcare planning and policy.
- Recent Center findings indicate that the number of active and employed nurses across our island state is representative of each county's overall population. From this, we gather that nurses are well distributed and contributing to the care needs of the communities where they live and serve. Should the Nurse License Compact be enacted, the ability to assess and analyze the presence of the current, available nursing workforce, including demographics, location of care, or setting, specialty and role of the nurse, will be diminished. This will compromise critical state healthcare workforce planning efforts.
- There is no nationally identified approach to addressing state nursing workforce supply and demand in a state with the Nurse License Compact.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.