



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

SCR 97 SUPPORTING NURSES, INC. IN ITS PLAN OF ACTION

Testimony Presented Before the Senate
Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Housing
and Committee on Health

April 13, 2005

by

Lois Magnussen, EdD, APRN
Interim Dean and Associate Professor
&
Jane K. Kadohiro, DrPH, APRN, CDE
Assistant Professor, Department of Nursing
School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene

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SCR 97 Supporting Nurses, Inc. in its plan of action that will enable Nurses, Inc. to locate, identify, recruit, educate, acclimate, and in general facilitate the immigration of accredited professional nurses and nurses aides to Hawaii and other states

Chair Ron Menor, Chair Rosalyn Baker, and Members of their Committees:

We are now aware that the nation wide nursing shortage is worsening. In 2003 the United States Bureau of Labor statistics showed there were 400,000 vacant nursing positions in the United States, and it is predicted that the shortage will exceed 500,000 by the end of 2006. There are more than 14,000 active registered nurses in Hawaii; however, in 2000 the State experienced a shortage of 1,041 registered nurses, which is expected to grow to 1,518 by 2005 and to 2,267 by 2010.

As one way of addressing the nursing shortage, SCR 97 proposes that Nurses, Inc. be supported to facilitate the immigration of accredited, professional nurses and nurse aides to Hawaii and other states. It also proposes that its operations not be limited to foreign recruitment and placement, but to provide appropriate scholarships and other financial aid to United States citizens engaged in nursing and healthcare, and to also seek qualified applicants from the United States Trust Territories and islands of the Pacific. Finally, it proposes that the State of Hawaii fund the costs of its operations including, but not limited to, nurse-candidate's legal and Immigration and Naturalization Service fees, supplemental education as necessary, placement, transportation, and accommodations.

Although the University of Hawaii School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene is in support of a multi-faceted approach to address the nursing shortage we do not support this resolution. It is now known within the nursing profession that the nursing shortage is world wide. We do not believe that it is appropriate to solve the American nursing shortage by raiding the resources of other countries. We believe that one of the preferred ways to address the nursing shortage in Hawaii is to provide additional funding for the nursing programs within the University of Hawaii System. Faculty within the system are reviewing ways that they can work together to better serve our students' career goals. Additional faculty in these programs will enable the programs to admit more students who will be prepared to become the future professionals who will provide nursing care to Hawaii's people.

The Hawaii State Center for Nursing is also looking at other ways to address our State's nursing shortage, including recruitment and retention of already qualified nurses. We also support their efforts to address this situation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.