

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 37

2 **47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION TO STUDY THE
12 IMPACT OF NURSE STAFFING AND RETENTION ISSUES ON WORKFORCE
13 DEVELOPMENT.

14
15 WHEREAS, New Mexico hospitals and other health care
16 providers are facing serious shortages of professional nurses;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, physicians and nurses agree that hospital
19 staffing levels of nurses are often inadequate to ensure safe
20 and effective care of patients; and

21 WHEREAS, a 2001 national study identified a clear link
22 between nurse staffing levels and burnout, job dissatisfaction
23 and nurse retention; and

24 WHEREAS, a 2002 report by the institute of medicine of the
25 national academy of sciences estimated that as many as ninety-

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1 eight thousand hospitalized persons in America die each year as
2 a result of errors in their care; and

3 WHEREAS, there is a direct relationship between nurse
4 staffing and patient well-being; and

5 WHEREAS, recent studies show that lean nurse staffing is
6 directly associated with an increased length of time in the
7 hospital and increased incidence of urinary tract infections,
8 post-operative infections, gastrointestinal bleeding, cardiac
9 arrest, pneumonia, pressure ulcers and death; and

10 WHEREAS, substantial decreases in mortality rates of
11 hospitalized patients could result from increasing nurse
12 staffing; and

13 WHEREAS, according to the United States government
14 accountability office, the current shortage of nurses is partly
15 due to increasingly complex patient care needs as well as
16 decreased job satisfaction due to such factors as long working
17 hours, heavy workloads and high emotional exhaustion; and

18 WHEREAS, in New Mexico, seventeen thousand nurses provide
19 patient care in virtually all locations in which health care is
20 delivered, including hospitals, nursing homes, ambulatory care
21 settings, clinics, private homes, schools and workplaces; and

22 WHEREAS, increased nurse recruitment and retention could
23 result in reduced errors, increased patient safety and outcomes
24 and improved job satisfaction for nurses;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE

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1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico health policy
2 commission be requested to study the impact of nurse staffing
3 and retention issues on workforce development and patient
4 safety; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study address standards of
6 nurse staffing and recommended nurse-to-patient ratios, the
7 effect of long hours on quality of patient care, environment of
8 care issues as they relate to both nurses and patients and
9 methods of recruitment and retention of nurses in all settings;
10 and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in conducting the study, the
12 New Mexico health policy commission confer with others with
13 knowledge and interest in nursing, to include the department of
14 health, statewide associations representing hospitals and
15 health systems, physicians, nurses, home health care providers,
16 nurse executives and nursing homes and a statewide organization
17 dedicated to excellence in nursing; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico health policy
19 commission report its findings and recommendations to the
20 legislative health and human services committee at its October
21 2005 meeting; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
23 sent to the director of the New Mexico health policy commission
24 and the secretary of health.

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