
Health Care Committee

HB 2711

Brief Description: Funding a central resource center for the nursing work force.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Morrell, Cody, McIntire, Chase and Conway.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Nursing Resource Center Account through a \$5 surcharge on nursing licenses to fund activities to collect data about the nursing workforce and to serve as a central resource for issues related to the nursing profession.

Hearing Date: 1/27/04

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission regulates advanced registered nurse practitioners, licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, and nursing technicians. The Commission also has some responsibilities over nursing assistants. There are approximately 125,000 of these health care professionals licensed in Washington State.

In 2002, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board convened a task force to examine the extent of the shortage of trained health care providers in Washington and to develop recommendations for increasing their numbers. The Board's 2002 report to the Legislature noted that hospital registered nurse vacancy rates were 9.2 percent statewide in 2001 and that there is potential for a more severe shortage as the population ages.

Summary of Bill:

The "Nursing Resource Center Account" (account) is created. The account is to be funded through a \$5 surcharge added to all nursing licenses. The Department of Health (Department) is to use these funds to contract with an organization to: maintain data on the current supply and demand of nurses; form partnerships to promote diversity, career mobility, and leadership development within the nursing profession; provide consultation and information related to state and national nursing resources; promote initiatives to improve the workplace environment for nurses; and promote careers in nursing.

The account is a non-appropriated account and the Secretary of Health (Secretary) may authorize expenditures. The Secretary may be reimbursed for the reasonable costs of collecting and distributing the surcharge. The Secretary may also adopt rules to implement the account.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 11, 2004.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.