
Health Care Committee

HB 2712

Brief Description: Creating a task force on nurses' work environment and patient safety.

Sponsors: Representatives Morrell, Cody, Darneille, Moeller, Clibborn, McIntire, Chase and Conway.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a task force to recommend ways to improve patient safety through changes in the work environment of nurses.

Hearing Date: 1/27/04

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

The United States Department of Health and Human Service's Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality requested that the Institute of Medicine conduct a study to identify aspects of the nursing work environment that impacts patient safety and potential improvements in health care working conditions that could likely increase patient safety. In November 2003, the Institute of Medicine released its report which includes recommendations relating to leadership in health care organizations; nurse staffing practices; nurse schedules; workplace procedures and design; and developing safety-conscious behaviors in health care organizations.

Summary of Bill:

The Secretary of Health must convene a task force to develop measures to improve patient safety and the work environment of nurses. The task force must consider the 2003 report of the Institute of Medicine, *Keeping Patients Safe: Transforming the Work Environment of Nurses* and suggest priorities for implementing the report's recommendations as well as other methods of improving patient safety. The task force must also examine nurse staffing patterns and develop proposals for nurse staffing systems.

The task force is composed of 15 members who include: representatives of nurse organizations, hospital organizations, long-term care facilities, and consumers; health care professionals providing direct patient care; nurse managers; faculty at a nursing program; a member of the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission; and a quality director and a human resources representative at a health care facility.

Administrative costs to support the task force are to be funded through nursing license fees currently existing in the Health Professions Account. The task force must issue its report by January 1, 2005, and the act expires on that same day.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2004.

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