

1 SENATE MEMORIAL 134

2 **52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO CONVENE A TASK  
12 FORCE TO STUDY AND REPORT ITS FINDINGS ON NURSE-TO-PATIENT  
13 RATIOS AT HOSPITALS IN NEW MEXICO AND ON THE EFFECTS OF A  
14 PATIENT SAFE STAFFING LAW FOR HOSPITALS IN NEW MEXICO.

15  
16 WHEREAS, there are nurse-to-patient standards, proposed by  
17 national nursing organizations for specific patient groups,  
18 that many hospitals throughout the United States have adopted;  
19 and

20 WHEREAS, nurses are required to advocate for patient  
21 needs, including ensuring the safety of patients, in a way  
22 unique to the nursing profession; and

23 WHEREAS, appropriate nurse-to-patient ratios reflect the  
24 minimum number of nurses that are needed to provide adequate  
25 care for a maximum number of patients; and

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1           WHEREAS, appropriate nurse-to-patient ratios help provide  
2 an optimum standard of care for patients and protect the safety  
3 of patients and hospital personnel; and

4           WHEREAS, it is proven that when appropriate nurse-to-  
5 patient ratios are enforced, patients spend fewer days in the  
6 hospital and patient outcomes are greatly improved; and

7           WHEREAS, there are currently no minimum standards for  
8 nurse-to-patient ratios in New Mexico statutes; and

9           WHEREAS, there is limited oversight and evaluation by the  
10 department of health to determine whether hospitals have  
11 implemented appropriate nurse-to-patient ratios and whether  
12 hospitals are complying with the nurse-to-patient ratios that  
13 each hospital has adopted; and

14           WHEREAS, annual review of nurse-to-patient ratio standards  
15 by the department of health is necessary to ensure that the  
16 state does not fall behind national standards and that patients  
17 in New Mexico receive the same quality of care as patients in  
18 other states; and

19           WHEREAS, input from stakeholder groups in New Mexico is  
20 essential to ensure that standards reflect special  
21 circumstances or conditions pertaining to the delivery of care  
22 in hospital settings in the state; and

23           WHEREAS, stakeholder input should be actively sought by  
24 the department of health in reviewing the standards; and

25           WHEREAS, for two years, the department of health has

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1 declined to act upon the request of a committee of the  
2 legislature to study the issue of patient safe staffing at  
3 hospitals in New Mexico;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
5 OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be  
6 requested to convene a task force to be known as the "patient  
7 safe staffing study group" to study nurse-to-patient ratios and  
8 support-staff-to-patient ratios at hospitals in New Mexico and  
9 the effect that passage of a patient safe staffing law, such as  
10 Senate Bill 284 of the fifty-second legislature, first session,  
11 might have currently and in the future on delivery of safe and  
12 appropriate patient care at hospitals in New Mexico; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the patient safe staffing  
14 study group be composed of representatives of the following  
15 organizations: the New Mexico hospital association, district  
16 1199 of the national union of hospital and health care  
17 employees, the New Mexico chapter of the American nurses  
18 association, the committee of interns and residents/service  
19 employees international union healthcare and the secretary of  
20 health; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the patient safe staffing  
22 study group be requested to contact the following organizations  
23 to provide input in the development of the task force's study  
24 and the development of a report:

25 A. American association of critical-care nurses;

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- 1           B. association of perioperative registered nurses;  
2           C. oncology nursing society;  
3           D. New Mexico emergency nurses association;  
4           E. association of women's health, obstetric and  
5 neonatal nurses;  
6           F. American psychiatric nurses association;  
7           G. American association of neuroscience nurses;  
8           H. society of gastroenterology nurses and  
9 associates;  
10          I. perianesthesia nurses association of New Mexico;  
11          J. rural institutional health care providers;  
12          K. hospitals in New Mexico; and  
13          L. other similar organizations; and

14           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the patient safe staffing  
15 study group be requested to report on the results of its  
16 studies to the interim legislative health and human services  
17 committee and any other appropriate interim legislative  
18 committee no later than November 2015; and

19           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the patient safe  
20 staffing study group report be made public; and

21           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
22 transmitted to the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative  
23 council; the New Mexico hospital association; district 1199 of  
24 the national union of hospital and health care employees; the  
25 New Mexico chapter of the American nurses association; the

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1 committee of interns and residents/service employees  
2 international union healthcare; and the secretary of health.

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