

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO REPORT ON NURSE-TO-PATIENT RATIOS AT HOSPITALS IN NEW MEXICO.

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

WHEREAS, nurses are required to advocate for patient needs, including ensuring the safety of patients, as no other medical profession is required to do; and

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

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

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

WHEREAS, there are currently no minimum standards for nurse-to-patient ratios in New Mexico law and there is limited oversight and evaluation by the department of health to determine if hospitals have implemented appropriate nurse-to-patient ratios and are complying with nurse-to-patient ratios

that each hospital has adopted; and

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

WHEREAS, input from stakeholder groups in New Mexico is essential in ensuring that standards reflect any special circumstances or conditions pertaining to the delivery of care in hospital settings in the state, and should be actively sought out by the department of health in reviewing the standards;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the following organizations be requested to provide input in review of the standards to ensure that the standards reflect any special circumstances or conditions pertaining to the delivery of care in hospital settings in the state:

- A. American association of critical-care nurses;
- B. association of perioperative registered nurses;
- C. oncology nursing society;
- D. New Mexico emergency nurses association;
- E. association of women's health, obstetric and neonatal nurses;
- F. American psychiatric nurses association;

- G. American association of neuroscience nurses;
- H. society of gastroenterology nurses and associates;
- I. American society of perianesthesia nurses;
- J. rural institutional health care providers; and
- K. hospitals in New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health report to the legislative finance committee and the legislative health and human services committee on the number of hospitals that adopt standards relating to nurse-to-patient ratios; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health include in its report the cost of implementing an oversight program that evaluates the outcomes from hospitals that do and do not implement the suggested standards; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health determine and report the cost of implementing an annual review of nurse-to-patient ratios in New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of health.