

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1604

To increase the number of well-educated nurses, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 13, 2007

Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. SMITH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To increase the number of well-educated nurses, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Nursing Education
5 and Quality of Health Care Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The current nursing workforce is the largest
9 group of healthcare providers in the United States.

1 (2) There will be a need for 1,200,000 new and
2 replacement nurses by 2014.

3 (3) Over 38,000 qualified applicants were
4 turned away from entry-level nursing programs lead-
5 ing to a baccalaureate degree in 2006. This number
6 increases to 147,000 when all schools of nursing are
7 taken into account.

8 (4) Insufficient numbers of faculty is the pri-
9 mary reason given by schools of nursing for not ac-
10 cepting qualified applicants.

11 (5) The average age of doctorally-prepared
12 nurse faculty is almost 56 years old.

13 (6) Nurses are the healthcare providers most
14 likely to intercept medication errors before the errors
15 reach patients and result in adverse events.

16 (7) Employing a greater proportion of more
17 highly educated nurses may reduce the rates of pa-
18 tient mortality.

19 **SEC. 3. RURAL NURSES TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM.**

20 Part D of title VIII of the Public Health Service Act
21 (42 U.S.C. 296p) is amended by adding at the end the
22 following:

23 **“SEC. 832. RURAL NURSES TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM.**

24 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
25 grants to, or enter into contracts with, eligible entities for

1 the purpose of educating nurses to serve in rural areas
2 and areas of nurse specialty shortage.

3 “(b) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives
4 a grant under this section shall use grant funds to develop
5 distance learning education by—

6 “(1) providing technology infrastructure to en-
7 hance or increase—

8 “(A) broadband connectivity; and

9 “(B) education rooms wired for the Inter-
10 net;

11 “(2) providing technology infrastructure for a
12 video conferencing network;

13 “(3) recruiting, training, and supporting com-
14 munity-based faculty for classroom and clinical
15 training; or

16 “(4) recruiting and supporting community-
17 based sites for clinical training.

18 “(c) ANALYSES.—Not later than 1 year after the Sec-
19 retary awards grants under subsection (a), and annually
20 thereafter, the Secretary, working with the Administrator
21 of the Health Resources and Services Administration and
22 appropriate nursing agencies, shall collect and perform
23 analyses on the number of nurses in the United States
24 to track rural nursing trends.

1 “(d) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
2 of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall generate an
3 annual report about the status of the nursing workforce
4 in the United States and shall disseminate the report as
5 the Secretary determines appropriate.

6 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
7 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
8 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
9 2008 through 2012.”.

10 **SEC. 4. NURSE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT.**

11 (a) NURSE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.—
12 Part D of title VIII of the Public Health Service Act (42
13 U.S.C. 296p et seq.) is amended by inserting after section
14 832 (as added by section 3) the following:

15 **“SEC. 833. NURSE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.**

16 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
17 the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services
18 Administration, shall award grants to eligible entities for
19 the establishment and operation of demonstration projects
20 that will expand the numbers of nurse faculty within
21 schools of nursing, including—

22 “(1) developing recruitment programs for
23 nurses with academic credentials for faculty status
24 who are not teaching at the time;

1 “(2) offering scholarships that facilitate the re-
2 turn of registered nurses to a school of nursing on
3 a part-time basis for graduate education that leads
4 to a career in nursing education;

5 “(3) providing additional education to enable
6 nurses with graduate degrees to serve as faculty by
7 obtaining teaching certificates;

8 “(4) developing accelerated doctoral programs
9 that will facilitate entry in a nursing faculty posi-
10 tion;

11 “(5) developing online continuing education
12 courses and practice teaching opportunities for nurse
13 faculty; and

14 “(6) developing research internships and fellow-
15 ships for nursing students at academic medical cen-
16 ters to foster interest in academic research.

17 “(b) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
18 of enactment of the Nursing Education and Quality of
19 Health Care Act of 2007, the Comptroller General of the
20 United States shall prepare and submit a report to Con-
21 gress that—

22 “(1) addresses the causes of the nurse faculty
23 shortage; and

1 “(2) makes recommendations to increase the
2 numbers and the retention of nurse faculty mem-
3 bers.

4 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
5 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
6 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
7 2008 through 2012.”.

8 (b) DOCTORAL PROGRAMS.—Section 811(f)(2) of the
9 Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 296j(f)(2)) is
10 amended by striking the period at the end and inserting
11 “, except that in the case of a nurse faculty shortage, the
12 Secretary may, in the Secretary’s discretion, obligate more
13 than 10 percent of such traineeships for individuals in doc-
14 toral degree programs.”.

15 **SEC. 5. DEVELOPING THE RURAL NURSING WORKFORCE.**

16 Part C of title VIII of the Public Health Service Act
17 (42 U.S.C. 296m) is amended by adding at the end the
18 following:

19 **“SEC. 822. DEVELOPING THE RURAL NURSING WORK-**
20 **FORCE.**

21 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
22 grants to, and enter into contracts with, eligible entities
23 to increase the nursing opportunities for individuals who
24 reside in rural communities. The activities funded under
25 this section shall include—

1 “(1) increasing and expanding pipeline pro-
2 grams, including—

3 “(A) mathematics and science programs;

4 “(B) Nurse Medical Academy of Science
5 and Health (MASH) Camp and other health ca-
6 reer pipeline programs for middle school and
7 secondary school students tied to higher edu-
8 cation curricula;

9 “(C) nurse mentor programs that provide
10 experience for secondary school students in clin-
11 ical settings to learn about the nursing profes-
12 sion;

13 “(D) training for middle school and sec-
14 ondary school guidance counselors; and

15 “(E) programs that attract nontraditional
16 nursing students, including minorities and men;

17 “(2) supporting a web-based healthcare work-
18 force development system that will be a database-
19 driven website to connect employers, educators, rural
20 communities, and students with the nursing pipeline
21 and recruitment programs described in this section;
22 and

23 “(3) increasing the program capacity of acceler-
24 ated registered nurse programs that recruit individ-
25 uals with baccalaureate degrees in other fields into

1 baccalaureate or graduate degree nursing programs
2 that serve rural communities, by—

3 “(A) increasing the number of faculty;

4 “(B) increasing clinical training sites; and

5 “(C) providing financial incentives, includ-
6 ing loan forgiveness and tuition assistance for
7 nurses who practice in rural areas.

8 “(b) AWARD BASIS.—

9 “(1) AWARD BASIS FOR FIRST 2 YEARS.—For
10 each of the first 2 fiscal years for which funds are
11 appropriated under subsection (c), the Secretary
12 shall, to the extent practicable—

13 “(A) use 80 percent of such funds to
14 award grants under this section to carry out the
15 activity described in subsection (a)(3); and

16 “(B) use 20 percent of such funds to
17 award grants under this section to carry out the
18 activities described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of
19 subsection (a).

20 “(2) AWARD BASIS FOR SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—

21 For each fiscal year following the first 2 fiscal years
22 for which funds are appropriated under subsection
23 (c), the Secretary shall, in awarding grants under
24 this section, arrange for such distribution of funds
25 and grants to carry out the various activities de-

1 scribed in subsection (a) as the Secretary determines
 2 appropriate.

3 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
 4 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
 5 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
 6 2008 through 2012.”.

7 **SEC. 6. NURSING AND THE QUALITY OF HEALTHCARE.**

8 Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act (42
 9 U.S.C. 296 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the
 10 following:

11 **“PART J—NURSING AND IMPROVING**
 12 **HEALTHCARE**

13 **“SEC. 861. LINKING NURSING EDUCATION AND QUALITY**
 14 **OUTCOMES PROGRAM.**

15 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in collaboration
 16 with the Administrator of the Health Resources and Serv-
 17 ices Administration and the Director of the Agency for
 18 Healthcare Research and Quality, shall award grants to
 19 entities that meet the requirements of subsection (b) to
 20 enable the entities to carry out demonstration projects
 21 that advance the education, delivery, or measurement of
 22 quality and patient safety in nursing practice.

23 “(b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a dem-
 24 onstration project grant under this section, an entity
 25 shall—

1 “(1) be a school of nursing, a nursing center,
2 an academic health center, a State or local govern-
3 ment, or any other public or private nonprofit entity
4 determined appropriate by the Secretary;

5 “(2) submit to the Secretary an application in
6 accordance with section 802;

7 “(3) form a partnership with 1 or more eligible
8 entities; and

9 “(4) submit a plan to the Secretary that
10 assures grant funds received under this section will
11 be used to support the implementation and evalua-
12 tion of healthcare quality improvement activities that
13 include—

14 “(A) with respect to healthcare systems,
15 activities relating to improving patient safety,
16 timeliness of care, effectiveness of care, equity
17 and efficiency of care, and patient-centeredness;
18 or

19 “(B) with respect to patients, activities, in-
20 cluding activities relating to staying healthy,
21 getting well, living with illness or disability, and
22 coping with end of life issues.

23 “(c) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under sub-
24 section (a), the Secretary shall give priority to entities that
25 will carry out 1 or more of the following:

1 “(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—Implementing initia-
2 tives in professional nursing education to enhance
3 patient safety efforts through evidence-based prac-
4 tice and quality improvement strategies by—

5 “(A) developing partnerships between ac-
6 credited schools of nursing and health care fa-
7 cilities, as defined in section 801, to educate
8 registered nurses in clinical leadership, inter-
9 disciplinary team management, systems admin-
10 istration, outcomes and risk management, and
11 education, for implementation in multiple
12 healthcare settings; and

13 “(B) providing scholarships for registered
14 professional nurses to pursue advanced nursing
15 education in accordance with subsection (a).

16 “(2) EDUCATION.—Integrating quality and
17 safety competencies into nursing education programs
18 by—

19 “(A) disseminating patient safety edu-
20 cation content to a nurse faculty administrator
21 to integrate quality competencies into each
22 school of nursing that are consistent with tech-
23 nical standards that are developed or adopted
24 by voluntary consensus standards bodies under
25 section 12(d) of the National Technology

1 Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 (15
2 U.S.C. 272 note); and

3 “(B) developing ongoing web-based mod-
4 ules for continued nurse faculty education to
5 bring research evidence into practice not later
6 than 2 years after receiving a grant under this
7 section; and

8 “(3) provide continuing education for practicing
9 nurses, including—

10 “(A) developing web-based modules related
11 to patient safety, including topics of evidenced-
12 based practice, professional communication, pa-
13 tient or family-centered care, systems thinking,
14 informatics, collaborative practice, medication,
15 and practice error; and

16 “(B) developing systems for the dissemina-
17 tion of continuing education through facility-
18 based staff development and orientation.

19 “(d) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall award
20 grants to entities described in subsection (b) to collect
21 data and study the potential benefits of basic and ad-
22 vanced nursing education levels or certification status in
23 the efforts to promote quality improvement strategies and
24 enhance patient outcomes and cost saving measures, by—

1 “(1) compiling and analyzing quality indicator
2 data from existing databases and other sources to
3 evaluate relationships between basic and advanced
4 nursing education levels or certification status on
5 nursing sensitive indicators and quality outcomes;

6 “(2) working in consultation with State depart-
7 ments of health or other nonprofit patient safety or-
8 ganizations; or

9 “(3) demonstrating the cost savings and sus-
10 tainability of the demonstration projects.

11 “(e) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
12 of enactment of the Nursing Education and Quality of
13 Health Care Act of 2007, the Secretary shall submit a
14 report to Congress on the results of the program under
15 this section.

16 “(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
17 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
18 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
19 2008 through 2012.”.

○