

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 522

Recognizing National Nurses Week.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 12, 2010

Mr. BURRIS (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. JOHANNIS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Recognizing National Nurses Week.

Whereas since 1990, National Nurses Week is celebrated annually from May 6, which is known as National Recognition Day for Nurses, through May 12, which is the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing;

Whereas National Nurses Week is a time of year to reflect on the important contributions that nurses make to provide safe, high-quality health care;

Whereas nurses are known to be patient advocates, acting fearlessly to protect the lives of those under their care;

Whereas nurses represent the largest single component of the health care profession with 3,100,000 jobs;

Whereas nurses are experienced researchers, and their work encompasses a wide scope of scientific inquiry, including clinical research, health systems and outcomes research, and nursing education research;

Whereas nurses are well positioned to provide leadership to eliminate health care disparities that exist in the United States;

Whereas nurses help inform and educate the public to improve the practice of all nurses and, more importantly, the health and safety of the patients they care for;

Whereas survey data shows that enrollments in entry-level baccalaureate programs in nursing rose by 3.6 percent in 2009, and though this marks the ninth consecutive year of enrollment growth, the annual increase in student capacity in 4-year nursing programs has declined sharply since 2003 when enrollment was up by 16.6 percent;

Whereas nursing programs in the United States were forced to reject almost 119,000 qualified applicants according to the most recent survey of all prelicensure nursing programs;

Whereas according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, employment of registered nurses is expected to grow by 22 percent from 2008 to 2018, which is a much faster rate of growth than the average rate of growth for all occupations;

Whereas according to survey data, enrollment in doctoral nursing programs increased by more than 20 percent this year, signaling strong interest among students in careers as nursing scientists, faculty, primary care providers, and specialists;

Whereas expanding capacity in baccalaureate and graduate programs is critical to sustaining a healthy nursing workforce and providing patients with the best care possible;

Whereas the nationwide nursing shortage has caused dedicated nurses to work longer hours and care for more acutely ill patients;

Whereas nurse educators work on average more than 57 hours per week in order to ensure that each and every new registered nurse receives an excellent education, advancing excellence among the next generation of nurses;

Whereas nurses inform legislators on the education, retention, recruitment, and practice of all nurses and, more importantly, the health and safety of the patients they care for; and

Whereas increased Federal and State support is needed to enhance existing programs and create new programs to educate nursing students at all levels, to increase the number of faculty members to educate nursing students, to create clinical sites and have appropriately prepared nurses teach and train at those sites, to create educational opportunities to retain nurses in the profession, and to educate and train more nurse research scientists who can discover new nursing: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes National Nurses Week;

3 (2) supports the goals and ideals of National
4 Nurses Week;

5 (3) acknowledges the importance of quality
6 higher education in nursing, including baccalaureate

1 and graduate programs, to meet the needs of one of
2 the fastest growing labor fields in the Nation; and
3 (4) supports the nurse capacity initiatives for
4 institutions of higher education included in the
5 Higher Education Opportunity Act.

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