

Vi served on countless boards, was a member of numerous civic associations, and was Aberdeen's resident historian, well-known and well-liked throughout the community. He learned everything he could about area projects and economic development issues, and maintained both a mental and physical archive of the town's history. If you had a question about something in Aberdeen's history, not only would Vi know the answer, he would most likely be able to produce a newspaper article about it. His clippings archives went back at least 60 years, if not more.

As a constant supporter of the Aberdeen community, Vi was involved in almost every opportunity for economic growth or quality-of-life improvement. He advocated for public projects as diverse as the Northeast Regional Health and Fitness Center, the Highway 12 Expressway and Moccasin Creek revitalization. When incentives for business recruitment and expansion were being sought, Vi was there to lead the charge.

Though he was a very successful businessman, as senior financial representative with Northwestern Mutual Life, and held many leadership positions within the insurance industry, it was his public service and influence within the community that will be remembered most.

I join the Aberdeen community, Vi's family, and friends, not in mourning his passing, but in celebrating his life and the innumerable contributions he made to the community of which he was so proud.

HOLT NURSING SCHOOL CAPACITY AMENDMENT TO COLLEGE OP- PORTUNITY AND AFFORD- ABILITY

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, nurses are the backbone of our health care system. The shortage of nurses throughout our country leaves patients unattended, doctors stressed, and nurses exhausted from extra shifts. A principle reason for this shortage of nurses is the shortage of nursing school faculty. Because of the faculty shortage many schools of nursing are turning away good students who would make good nurses.

I am pleased that my amendment which attaches the Nursing School Capacity Act, H.R. 677, to the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007 (H.R. 4137) has been accepted in the bill passed in the House. I thank Representative WELCH and Representative CAPPS, one of the Co-Chairs of the House Nursing Caucus, for cosponsoring this amendment with me. H.R. 677, which has 76 cosponsors, directs the Institute of Medicine to study the constraints experienced by schools of nursing in admitting and graduating enough nurses to meet growing needs.

I appreciate that House Education and Labor Committee Chairman Miller accepted our amendment and incorporated it into his Manager's Amendment. Today's action shows that Congress understands the healthcare crisis facing states like New Jersey.

The study my amendment directs will explore the constraints that our nation's schools

of nursing face and propose short and long term solutions to address the nursing crisis. I look forward to reviewing the study's recommendations and working to implement them before the quality of care suffers.

Over the years, I have heard from many nursing professionals from New Jersey about the nursing crisis, particularly the inability of nursing schools to meet growing workforce demands. In fact, a study from the National League of Nursing states that in 2004, nursing schools were forced to turn down 147,000 qualified applicants due to a lack of faculty. That is why I first introduced the Nursing School Capacity Act three years ago, and why I am excited that it's close to becoming law today.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the American Nurses Association, the American Organization of Nurse Executives and the New Jersey Hospital Association all endorsed the legislation. I ask unanimous consent that their endorsement letters be included in the RECORD.

We have not solved the nursing crisis with today's action, but we have taken a step in better understanding the problem.

FEBRUARY 4, 2008.

Hon. RUSH HOLT,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE HOLT: On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and the American Nurses Association, we would like to thank you for offering the language included in the Nursing School Capacity Act of 2007 (H.R. 677) as an amendment to the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007 (H.R. 4137).

Over the past decade, the inability to increase the supply of nurses has become more apparent as the challenges faced by nursing education programs have intensified. These challenges force schools of nursing to turn away thousands of qualified applicants each year. According to a 2006 AACN report, U.S. nursing schools turned away 42,866 qualified applicants due to an insufficient number of faculty, clinical sites, classroom space, clinical preceptors, and budget constraints. Almost three quarters of the nursing schools responding to AACN's survey pointed to faculty shortages as a primary reason for not accepting all qualified applicants into nursing programs. A Special Survey on Vacant Faculty Positions released by AACN in July 2007, reported a total of 767 faculty vacancies (8.8 percent vacancy rate) identified at 329 nursing schools with baccalaureate and/or graduate programs across the country.

Clearly, the obstacles faced by schools of nursing in attempting to increase enrollment and graduations are vastly complex and warrant further investigation. Your bill will facilitate the discussion of these constraints and help explore solutions to overcome the barriers that are preventing potential students from entering the nursing profession. In addition, your bill calls for recommendations to be made by the Institute of Medicine which will serve as a valuable resource for policy-makers as well as the health, industry, and education systems.

AACN and ANA sincerely appreciate your willingness to thoroughly investigate the nursing and nurse faculty shortage through the Nursing School Capacity Act.

Sincerely,

American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

American Nurses Association.

AMERICAN ORGANIZATION OF
NURSE EXECUTIVES,

Washington, DC, February 4, 2008.

Hon. RUSH HOLT,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN HOLT: On behalf of the over 6000 members of the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) representing nurses in all facets of executive practice, we would like to express our strong support for the amendment that you and Representative Welch are prepared to offer to H.R. 4147 the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007. The amendment incorporates the language of your bill H.R. 677, the Nursing School Capacity Act into a more comprehensive piece of legislation and would provide the nursing and health care communities with important research into the underlying causes of the nursing shortage.

The majority of AONE's membership of registered professional nurses are leaders in the day-to-day management and delivery of direct patient care services. In this position, we have been able to see first hand the impacts of the worsening nursing shortage and applaud your efforts to address this critical situation through the provision of study to be conducted by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. Understanding that the nursing shortage is the result of the convergence of a number of factors, your proposed legislation would identify the constraints encountered by schools of nursing in admitting and graduating the number of registered nurses to ensure patient safety but it would also propose recommendations to alleviate the constraints on a short-term and long-term basis.

AONE has been in the forefront of attempts to deal with the nursing shortage and welcomes the opportunity to participate in the proposed study as a consultant in partnership with the other relevant organizations named in your legislation. AONE has focused on the work environment and the educational preparation of the nurse of the future. We see our past and current work as integral to the study you have proposed. Your legislation provides a comprehensive approach to identifying and quantifying the factors that have contributed to the shortage such as regulatory barriers, educational preparation, salary and benefit structures, and characteristics of the workplace.

AONE applauds your efforts and those of Mr. Welch to include this needed legislation as an amendment to H.R. 4147 the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007.

Sincerely,

CAROL A. WATSON,
President.

PAMELA A. THOMPSON,
Chief Executive Officer.

NEW JERSEY HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION,
Princeton, NJ, February 4, 2008.

Hon. RUSH HOLT,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN HOLT: On behalf of our 119 member hospitals and their systems, I am writing to express our strong support for the Holt/Welch Amendment to H.R. 3147, the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007 that would incorporate your bill, H.R. 667, the Nursing School Capacity Act of 2007.

We have all known for too long that we have an ongoing shortage of nurses in this country, and although we have seen a recent increase in nursing candidates, we cannot keep pace with the demands to educate new nurses. One of the major issues is the inability to expand upon our nursing educational programs in this country. Within the past year 125,000 qualified potential nursing students have been placed on waiting lists, and

almost 2,000 are on waiting lists in New Jersey. These numbers will continue to increase unless we implement sound planning strategies to build a stronger infrastructure for nursing education.

The issue of faculty supply and demand is very complex and affects every nursing program very differently. It is for this reason that there is a need to conduct a national

study of all of these issues so that well formulated recommendations can address the needs of each level of nursing education.

H.R. 667 will charge the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences to undertake this study and identify constraints encountered by schools of nursing in admitting and graduating the number of

nurses sufficient to meet the healthcare needs of the United States.

I commend your leadership on this issue and look forward to working with you in getting this bill signed into law.

Sincerely,

GARY S. CARTER,
President & CEO.