



The Hospital + Healthsystem  
Association of Pennsylvania

*Leading for Better Health*

April 26, 2024

The Honorable David G. Argall  
Chair, Senate Education Committee  
The Pennsylvania Senate  
P.O. Box 203029  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3029

The Honorable Lindsey M. Williams  
Minority Chair, Senate Education Committee  
The Pennsylvania Senate  
P.O. Box 203038  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3038

Dear Chairman Argall and Chairwoman Williams:

On behalf of more than 230 members statewide, The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP) writes to support Senate Bill 1102 and Senate Bill 1104, both of which would help facilitate interested Pennsylvanians' entry into the health care workforce.

SB 1102 would expand the Pennsylvania Nurse Aide Training program and allow student and graduate nurses to immediately take the Certified Nurse Aide exam after completing their education programs. SB 1104 would allow high school juniors and seniors to earn up to two credits toward their graduation requirements if they have worked in a congregate health care setting, including a hospital.

High vacancy rates persist throughout Pennsylvania hospitals, particularly among nursing support staff (19%), registered nurses providing direct patient care (14%), and medical assistants (13%). The strain is felt most acutely in Pennsylvania's rural hospitals who are struggling to fill average position vacancies of 28 percent for nursing support staff and 26 percent for registered nurses.

HAP has long advocated for ways to expand and enhance the health care workforce across the entire and interrelated continuum of care. Pennsylvania hospitals are working hard to implement a wide range of strategies to develop a new generation of health care professionals including partnerships with local schools and community groups, internal clinical training programs, apprenticeships, internships, and more. The hospital community recognizes SB 1102 and SB 1104 as complimentary measures that break down barriers across the continuum of care for those interested in entering health care careers.

Measures such as SB 1102 and SB 1104 support a robust long-term care workforce, which supports the entire continuum of care. Long-term care professionals provide a wide range of services including, for example, helping patients with medications, assisting with medical equipment, and aiding physical therapy. This important work allows Pennsylvanians to stay healthier into their advancing years, which reduces their need for care in hospitals and other settings.

We respectfully ask that you please encourage your caucuses to support and vote yes on these worthy measures. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [HTyler@HAPonline.org](mailto:HTyler@HAPonline.org).

Sincerely,

Heather Tyler  
Vice President, State Legislative Advocacy

c: Members of the Senate Education Committee