



Leading for Better Health

June 10, 2024

The Honorable Patrick J. Stefano, Chair
Senate Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure
Pennsylvania Senate
Senate Box 203032
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Lisa M. Boscola, Democratic Chair
Senate Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure
Pennsylvania Senate
Senate Box 203018
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Chairman Stefano and Chairwoman Boscola:

On behalf of more than 235 hospital and health system members statewide, The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP) writes to support Senate Bill (SB) 1251, sponsored by Chairman Stefano. The measure updates Pennsylvania's nursing law to allow for both regionally and nationally accredited programs to offer registered nurse (RN) education.

The U.S. Department of Education eliminated the distinction between regional and national accreditation during 2019. Senate Bill 1251 would help the Pennsylvania Nursing Law—which currently only recognizes regionally accredited institutions—to conform with current policies.

There is a health care workforce emergency in the commonwealth and across the nation. A recent study of HAP members revealed hospitals' statewide nursing and nursing support vacancy rates range from 14–19 percent. Rural hospitals' rates soar to nearly double that of their urban and suburban counterparts.

The reasons behind the chronic workforce shortage are complex and will require sustained consideration and investment. We appreciate your partnership in that work. This seemingly small change will not solve the workforce crisis, but SB 1251 will expand opportunities for more nursing programs to educate more nurses in Pennsylvania—and that's an important step in the right direction.

HAP and its members strongly support every proactive effort to address the health care workforce crisis. We urge you to vote yes on this important bill and urge your colleagues to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at HTyler@HAPonline.org or (717) 433-1997.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather Tyler".

Heather Tyler
Vice President, State Legislative Advocacy

c: The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure