



SENATE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

February 6, 2019

SB 273 – Relative to The Regulation of Nursing Assistants by the Board of Nursing

Testimony

Good morning, Madam Chair and members of the committee. My name is Paula Minnehan, VP, State Government Relations with the New Hampshire Hospital Association (NHHA), representing all 26 of the state's community hospitals as well as all specialty hospitals.

The NHHA has concerns with SB 273, as introduced. We very much appreciate the sponsor's willingness to meet with stake-holders numerous times to discuss our concerns with the bill. We appreciate the Board of Nursing Executive Director participating in these discussions as well. We understand the sponsor has prepared an amendment to the bill that would replace the original bill with language to establish a Study Committee. We believe there are many outstanding concerns regarding the potential of eliminating the licensure of nursing assistants and we believe strongly that further study is required to determine if the approach contemplated in the legislation is in the best interest of the health care system in New Hampshire.

Furthermore, we are concerned that the individuals directly impacted by this legislation, have not weighed in formally. We have heard informally, from many of the LNAs, that they are proud of their Licensure status and have concerns with losing that status. They see it as a professional career advancement step, and we do not want to remove that status without fully considering the consequences and the potential alternatives. We need to hear from the LNAs.

NHHA is also concerned with the fiscal implications of the elimination of the revenue received from the licensure fees. We were told that the revenue loss is about a quarter of a million dollars. We were also told that the shortfall would be made up by increasing the licensing fees of nurses.

This is not an approach that NHHA can support. We do not fully understand the motivation for eliminating the licensure status of nursing assistants and then increasing the licensing fees of nurses.

We ask that the committee allow for further study of the proposal so that all the affected stakeholders; hospitals, nursing homes, home care agencies, and Licensed Nursing Assistants can weigh in on the proposal and determine, as a group, what is in the best interest of the health care community and the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments. While we are not comfortable with SB 273 as introduced, we are supportive of the amendment and encourage the committee to pass this legislation to study the issue further. I am happy to answer any questions.