



WORKING DRAFT

General Assembly

Raised Bill No.

No. 13

10006 _____ JUD

Referred to Committee on

Introduced by:
(JUD)

AN ACT CONCERNING NURSING AND MENTAL HEALTH STAFF AT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND OTHER STATE-OPERATED INSTITUTIONS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) On or before July 1, 2008,
2 the Commissioner of Public Health, in consultation with the Board of
3 Governors of Higher Education, shall establish a program for the
4 forgiveness of loans provided by the state to students who are
5 pursuing a degree leading to licensure as a registered nurse. The loans
6 shall be forgiven in accordance with subsection (b) of this section if the
7 student practices as a registered nurse in a state-operated facility or
8 institution after receiving such degree.

9 (b) Participants in the loan forgiveness program shall have loans
10 that qualify for forgiveness under the program forgiven based upon
11 the following schedule: (1) Ten per cent of the total amount borrowed
12 and qualified for under the program shall be forgiven upon the
13 completion of one year's service pursuant to the program; (2) twenty-
14 five per cent of the total amount borrowed and qualified for under the
15 program shall be forgiven upon the completion of two years' service

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16 pursuant to the program; (3) forty-five per cent of the total amount
17 borrowed and qualified for under the program shall be forgiven upon
18 the completion of three years' service pursuant to the program; (4)
19 seventy per cent of the total amount borrowed and qualified for under
20 the program shall be forgiven upon the completion of four years'
21 service pursuant to the program; and (5) one hundred per cent of the
22 total amount borrowed and qualified for under the program shall be
23 forgiven upon the completion of five years' service pursuant to the
24 program.

25 (c) Not later than July 1, 2008, the Commissioner of Public Health, in
26 consultation with the Board of Governors of Higher Education, shall
27 adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of
28 the general statutes, to establish procedures to administer the loan
29 forgiveness program.

30 (d) The Department of Public Health, in consultation with the
31 Department of Higher Education, shall advertise the loan forgiveness
32 program established under this section in such manner as the
33 Department of Public Health determines will most effectively attract a
34 greater number of persons to pursue a degree leading to licensure as a
35 registered nurse and practice in a state-operated facility or institution
36 thereafter.

37 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2008*) The sum of one million five hundred
38 thousand dollars is appropriated to the Department of Public Health,
39 from the General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, for the
40 loan forgiveness program authorized under section 1 of this act.

41 Sec. 3. (*Effective July 1, 2008*) The sum of two hundred fifty thousand
42 dollars is appropriated to the Department of Public Health, from the
43 General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, for purposes of
44 the accelerated relicensure of nurses who have left the workforce and
45 whose licenses have expired.

46 Sec. 4. (*Effective July 1, 2008*) The sum of two hundred thousand

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47 dollars is appropriated to the Department of Public Health, from the
48 General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, for purposes of
49 developing and implementing an advertising campaign to recruit
50 nurses to work at state-operated institutions.

51 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) On and after the effective
52 date of this section, no state agency may require a nurse in a state-
53 operated institution to work in excess of a predetermined scheduled
54 work shift, provided such scheduled work shift is determined and
55 promulgated not less than forty-eight hours prior to the
56 commencement of such scheduled work shift. Any nurse may
57 volunteer or agree to work hours in addition to such scheduled work
58 shift but the refusal by a nurse to accept such additional hours shall
59 not be grounds for discrimination, dismissal, discharge or any other
60 penalty or employment decision adverse to the nurse.

61 (b) The provisions of this section shall not apply: (1) To any nurse
62 participating in a surgical procedure until such procedure is
63 completed; (2) to any nurse working in a critical care unit until such
64 nurse is relieved by another nurse who is commencing a scheduled
65 work shift; (3) in the case of a public health emergency; (4) in the case
66 of an institutional emergency including, but not limited to, adverse
67 weather conditions, catastrophe or widespread illness, that in the
68 opinion of the administrator of the institution will significantly reduce
69 the number of nurses available for a scheduled work shift, provided
70 the administrator of the institution has made a good faith effort to
71 mitigate the impact of such institutional emergency on the availability
72 of nurses; or (5) to any nurse who is covered by a collective bargaining
73 agreement that contains provisions addressing the issue of mandatory
74 overtime.

75 Sec. 6. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Correction shall
76 make reasonable efforts to fill any vacancies in authorized positions for
77 employees who provide mental health services by April 15, 2008. Not
78 later than March 1, 2008, the commissioner shall submit a report to the

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79 joint standing committee of the General Assembly on judiciary on the
80 status of the commissioner's efforts to fill such vacancies.

81 Sec. 7. (*Effective from passage*) During the fiscal year ending June 30,
82 2009, the Commissioner of Correction shall expand the special
83 overtime staffing pilot program to all correctional facilities.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>from passage</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To ensure there is adequate nursing and mental health staff at correctional facilities and other state-operated institutions.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]