

Testimony
Submitted to the Committee on Public Health
March 2, 2016

**SENATE BILL 293: AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE SCHOOL NURSE ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and esteemed members of the Public Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today.

My name is **Tim Carroll** and I am the **Director of Health Services for the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)**. CREC currently serves the educational needs of CREC's 18 magnet schools and 9 Student Service programs – on a daily basis nearly 12,000 students. More than 30 nurses in these programs treat more than 1,000 students each day.

I am here to speak in support of Senate Bill 293: An Act Concerning Recommendations of the School Nurse Advisory Council.

School Nursing and the role of school nurses has changed dramatically since its inception in the early 1900's. While once viewed as the person with Band-Aids and ice packs and the person who calls a parent to pick up their sick child – today the school nurse's role is to provide care for a number of chronic conditions and complex medical problems so that students can, to the best of their ability, engage in the educational process.

School nurses are responsible for giving prescribed, complex medication regimes for medical and behavioral health needs; monitoring severe diabetics and seizure disorders, addressing and treating severe allergic conditions and reactions; and providing ongoing care and support to the host of injuries sustained in athletic competitions, including following post-concussion protocols. Nurses today even provide catheterizations and tube feedings – all this while essentially being a one-person show. Strong nurse training programs provide the foundations of quality medical care – how to provide that care within a school environment is another thing altogether.

School nurses provide state mandated health screenings; give referrals to medical homes and private health care providers; educate staff and students; and often times they are the link between school personnel, family, and community resources. School nurses need to learn how to function as part of a multidisciplinary team – not with other medical providers, but with teachers, social workers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, and school administrators.

School nurses have to become familiar with laws regarding the delegation of medications and treatments to unlicensed personnel in schools, as well as laws surrounding special education, 504 Plans, Individual Education Programs (IEPs) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – IDEA. School nurses have to learn the nuances of federal privacy regulations under the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) within an educational setting.

Needless to say, a school nurse's responsibilities are varied and complex.

Your support of Senate Bill 293, and the training element that the bill provides, is essential to ensuring that school nurses receive the background needed to serve students today. Given the importance of this training, I do respectfully ask that you consider changing the mandatory time frame for training to within 3 months, rather than 1 year.

Thank you for your time and consideration.