

To: Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

From: Heather Evans, PhD, RNC-MNN, CLC

Re: H.B. No. 5014 (Raised) An Act Establishing a Tax Credit for Providers of Clinical Nursing Experiences

February 13, 2020

Dear Chairman Haddad, Chairman Haskell, and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the raised bill, No. 5014, An Act Establishing a Tax Credit for Providers of Clinical Nursing Experiences. My name is Heather Evans, and I live in Mansfield Center, CT. **I am writing in support of HB 5014.**

I am a Registered Nurse with a Doctorate in Nursing. For more than 15 years, I have worked at the bedside and also in higher education. I have taught in colleges and universities in Arizona, Vermont, New Hampshire and, for the past 10 years, I have been teaching in Connecticut.

Nursing is an amazing profession. We are the backbone of healthcare in hospitals, in communities, and in homes. The care provided by advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), has been proven to be both high-quality and cost-effective. APRNs are often called upon to provide care to our most vulnerable and underserved populations, providing primary care, specialty services, preventative care, and follow-up to these populations. Despite continued reports indicating the benefit of care provided by registered nurses and APRNs, there continues to be a shortage of nurses throughout our nation.

We are aware of the need to educate and prepare more registered nurses and APRNs. However, we currently do not have the ability to train an adequate number of new nurses due to budget constraints, infrastructure constraints, and a lack of clinical preceptorships. In fact, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) reports that, in 2018, nursing schools turned away 75,029 *qualified* applicants due to the current constraints.

The lack of available clinical preceptors has become a large problem in Connecticut as well as nationally. Even the highest-quality classroom education cannot adequately prepare nurses for practice without clinical experiences. We must expose nursing students to actual clinical experiences by placing them with qualified preceptors. Being a preceptor is not a small thing to ask of a practicing nurse. Being a preceptor for a nursing student is rewarding, but it also requires extra time and energy. Many preceptors would be incentivized by receiving a financial benefit, but students should not have to carry this added financial burden. I strongly believe that, by offering preceptors a tax incentive, we may be able to attract and retain additional preceptors. This would allow us to train more nurses, both at the undergraduate level and at the graduate level.

I appreciate your willingness to explore this potential way to help us educate more nurses by incentivizing preceptors. I urge you to continue to support HB 5014.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Evans", written in a cursive style.

Heather Evans, PhD, RNC-MNN, CLC