

Testimony in Support of:  
HB 5014: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TAX CREDIT FOR PROVIDERS OF CLINICAL NURSING EXPERIENCES

Submitted by:  
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Dear members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee,

My name is Dr. Pamela Forte and I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 5014, An Act Establishing a Tax Credit for Providers of Clinical Nursing Experiences. Please accept this written testimony on behalf of the Nursing Department at Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU). In my role as Director of Clinical Education in the Nursing Department at SCSU, I am responsible for oversight of clinical placements for our undergraduate and graduate students. For SCSU this means over 1,150 clinical placements per year for our traditional and accelerated baccalaureate pre-licensure programs students; our graduate students in the Family Nurse Practitioners (FNP), Nurse Educators, and Clinical Nurse Leaders programs, and our students in the EdD doctoral program in Nursing Education. In this role, I have intimate knowledge of our student and clinical partner needs. Our clinical practice sites are committed to their contributions to the education of nursing students; yet are often overwhelmed by the need to also maintain safe, high quality healthcare delivery. When clinical practice sites and their healthcare providers *volunteer* to precept nursing students, they are taking on additional responsibility to not only maintain safe, high quality patient care, but to also share their knowledge with the next generation of nurses. Both of these objectives are critically important,

but they can also be opposing forces when relying on healthcare providers to offer this vitally important practice-based education to nursing students in their busy clinical sites.

In addition to the number of placements per year, at the graduate level, many preceptors need to charge universities (i.e., Schools of Nursing) a preceptor fee per student to offset the additional time required to properly precept a FNP student. SCSU currently spends approximately twenty thousand dollars per year for FNP preceptors; a fee that is not passed onto the student and therefore significantly impacts an already limited budget (especially at a state university).

Providing a tax credit to the providers who offer to precept nursing students or a tax credit to the institutions who employ these preceptors that do not accept a fee can have some very positive effects. First, it can encourage more nurses or other healthcare providers to precept nursing students. This would enable more students to potentially enter nursing programs at a time when the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics projects more than 500,000 experienced RNs will retire by 2022, leaving a gap of 1.1 million new nurses needed to replace the retiring RNs and fill the increased demand for healthcare services. The tax credit's positive effects for the preceptors' healthcare institutions, can be in providing additional funds needed to increase staffing during times of precepting, thereby allowing nurses to have a decreased patient assignment while they are focusing on educating their student nurse preceptees. The ability to increase staffing will allow preceptors to more keenly focus on educating student nurses to bolster their competencies; while also providing safe care to their patients.

Nursing is a practice-based discipline. Providing nursing students with meaningful, direct care clinical experiences guided by preceptors who are experts in clinical practice is vitally

important. With some studies reporting approximately 400,000 deaths occur in the United States each year as a result of medical errors or preventable harm, there is no greater need in the education of new nurses than to graduate nurses who are receiving a strong foundation of theoretical knowledge and equally rigorous clinical practice experiences.

I urge you to support HB 5014. This bill will support an increase in critically needed preceptors; potentially decrease growing costs at schools of nursing; and most importantly assure the people of our state that the nurses who are caring for them at some of the most vulnerable times in their lives are well-prepared and ready to meet their critical healthcare needs. Thank you for your consideration.

<https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2017/article/occupational-projections-charts.htm>

<http://www.ihl.org/Engage/Initiatives/Patient-Safety-Awareness-Week/Pages/default.aspx>



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