

**UNIVERSITY  
OF HARTFORD**  

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**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,  
NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS**

**Testimony by Dr. Cesarina Thompson  
Dean, College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions  
University of Hartford**

**Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement  
Thursday, February 13, 2020**

On behalf of the University of Hartford's College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions at the University of Hartford, I want to express my strong support of **H.B. 5014, An Act Establishing a Tax Credit for Providers of Clinical Nursing Experiences.**

As you know, our nation continues to face a significant shortage of registered nurses. Given the increasing rates of chronic diseases, an aging population, and projected retirement of about one million RNs by 2030, this shortage will continue to be a challenge for years to come. In fact, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment for registered nurses will grow at a rate much faster than the average for all occupations through at least the next decade. The State of Connecticut also will continue to experience a high demand of registered nurses, especially given its aging population demographics.

To increase the supply of registered nurses in the State of Connecticut, we must graduate a larger number of new RNs, especially those prepared at the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) level who will be best prepared to care for the complex needs of our citizens. Many of the State's nursing programs have expanded their enrollments to increase the supply of RNs. For example, the University of Hartford launched a new BSN program in fall 2019 to address the critical need for RNs across our State and particularly in medically underserved areas.

As you know, the preparation of RNs relies heavily on clinical learning experiences that occur in healthcare organizations. Due to a number of economic factors, it has become increasingly difficult for hospitals and other healthcare organizations to continue to provide and/or expand the number of nursing clinical placements. As a result, nursing programs have had to limit the number of students they admit to their programs at a time of increasing need. Without the availability of sufficient clinical learning experiences, nursing programs will not be able to prepare an adequate number of future nurses to meet the State's needs, nor will they be adequately prepared to practice in today's healthcare environments, jeopardizing the quality and safety of patients under their care. H.B. 5014 offers a timely economic incentive for healthcare organizations to support nursing clinical education so that the State's nursing education programs can meet the demand for registered nurses. I urge the committee to support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed bill. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.