



New York State
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
FEDERATION AFL-CIO
LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT
100 State Street, Suite 1070
Albany, NY 12207

Kenneth Brynien, *President*

1-800-724-4997
1-518-432-4003
Fax: 1-518-432-7739

Arlea Igoe, *Secretary Treasurer*

OPPOSE

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The New York State Public Employees Federation, representing 58,000 Professional, Scientific, and Technical workers of New York State, opposes this legislation.

This bill would require future registered nursing graduates to obtain a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing within ten years of graduation, or forfeit their license as a Registered Nurse. At present, a nurse can qualify as an RN with either an Associates degree or a BS degree.

The fact is that there are simply not enough licensed nurses currently working in New York State to deliver direct care to patients. There exists a plethora of reasons for such a shortage. This bill creates new obstacles to the recruitment and retention of nurses, so it will make the shortage worse.

Nurses with an Associates Degree and nurses with a Bachelor's Degree are both capable of providing quality care to their patients. All Registered Nurses, regardless of academic background, must pass an exam in order to be licensed. Associate degree nurses pass the exam at comparable rates to Baccalaureate degree graduates

While the legislation "grandfathers" in current nurses, it would still have the effect of making the nursing shortage worse. It makes it more expensive and more time-consuming for individuals to commit to a career in nursing.

- When North Dakota mandated a bachelor's degree to practice as a Registered Nurse, over 200+ nursing students left the state to study nursing in associate degree programs in Minnesota. North Dakota has since rescinded this requirement in order to reduce the projected nursing shortage in their state.

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- If New York State were to implement such a requirement, nurses and students may choose to leave the state and/or work in another state, leaving a drought of nurses in New York.
- Associate degree nurses may leave the profession rather than embarking on costly and time-consuming education, exacerbating an already dire nurse shortage.

Nurses should always be encouraged to continue their college education. However, such encouragement should not come in the form of a mandatory requirement to maintain their licenses. It should certainly not come in the form of the threat of forfeiture of a license that nurses have worked hard to obtain. There is no compelling need that justifies adoption of this legislation. What is needed is legislation to provide for safe staffing in health care institutions and an end to mandatory overtime. These measures would encourage many nurses who have left the profession to return to work in health care, thereby alleviating the shortage.

For these reasons, the Public Employees Federation urges you to oppose this legislation.

For more information, please contact:

Brian F. Curran, Legislative Director and Counsel