



# Allegheny County Council

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## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 13043-24, **Version:** 1

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Motion of the Council of Allegheny County urging the enactment of HB 1825 and SB 25, currently pending before the Pennsylvania General Assembly, with all deliberate speed.

**Whereas**, according to the Journal of Nursing Regulation, nursing is the nation’s largest healthcare profession, with nearly 5.2 million registered nurses (RNs) currently employed in healthcare; and

**Whereas**, the median age of RNs, however, was 46 as of 2022, with over one quarter of RNs indicating that they were contemplating retirement within the next 5 years (see Smiley, R.A., Allgeyer, R.L., Shobo, Y., Lyons, K.C., Letourneau, R., Zhong, E., Kaminski-Ozturk, N., & Alexander, M. (April 2023). The 2022 National Nursing Workforce Survey. *Journal of Nursing Regulation*, 14(1), Supplement (S1-S90)); and

**Whereas**, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) 2022 Occupational Outlook Handbook for Registered Nurses estimates that over 200,000 new RN positions will be created nationwide each year from 2021-2031; and

**Whereas**, the BLS 2022 Occupational Outlook Handbook for Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Midwives and Nurse Practitioners indicates that, with more than four times as many RNs in the United States as physicians, nursing delivers an extended array of healthcare services, including primary and preventive care by nurse practitioners with specialized education in such areas as pediatrics, family health, women's health, and gerontological care. Nursing's scope also includes services by certified nurse-midwives and nurse anesthetists, as well as care in cardiac, oncology, neonatal, neurological, and obstetric/gynecological nursing and other advanced clinical specialties; and

**Whereas**, as reported by Channel 21 News in Harrisburg, PA, however “[d]ata from the Hospital and Health System Association of Pennsylvania [HAP] predicts PA will have a shortage of over 20,000 nurses by 2026, which is the worst number nationwide.” Person, Elise, *An inside look at the nursing shortage, PA expected to have worst shortage nationwide*, February 18, 2024; and

**Whereas**, HAP indicates that hospitals throughout the Commonwealth face average vacancy rates of 14% for nurses, with hospitals in rural communities tending to face even greater workforce challenges; and

**Whereas**, HAP supports a comprehensive strategy for combating this serious nursing shortage, with key initiatives including (1) promoting careers in nursing, fostering a more diverse and equitable health care workforce, and supporting career advancement for health care professionals, (2) encouraging innovative care models, technology, and benefits that improve work/life harmony and (3) empowering providers to spend more time and energy caring for patients and practicing at the top of their license and training; and

**Whereas**, two companion bills (HB 1825 and SB 25) have been introduced in the Pennsylvania General Assembly in an effort to promote nursing careers and career advancement by reforming the Commonwealth’s archaic nurse practitioner regulations; and

**Whereas**, as noted by the HB 1825 co-sponsorship memo, “[m]odern healthcare is presenting new challenges, such as staffing shortages, and the Commonwealth needs to be able to adapt to ensure

Pennsylvanians continue to have access to quality care. The General Assembly can do this by expanding access to high-quality care by removing archaic restrictions on Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), that no longer reflect modern medicine. Under my bill, the State Board of Nursing is to establish an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse-Certified Nurse Practitioner (APRN-CNP) license in areas of expertise consistent with training and focus of practice. This replaces the current state certification requirement.”; and

**Whereas**, as also noted in the HB 1825 co-sponsorship memo, “[o]nce an APRN-CNP has practiced for three years and completed a 3,600-hour physician collaboration requirement, APRN-CNPs will be permitted to practice to the full extent of their education and training by removing the requirement for a formal collaborative agreement. A collaborative agreement is currently required for CNPs to practice and write prescriptions. Twenty-six other states and the District of Columbia currently allow nurse practitioners full practice authority. By modernizing our current law, we will be able to provide a better pathway for APRN-CNPs and enable these providers to more effectively care for Pennsylvanians.”; and

**Whereas**, both HB 1825 and SB 25 have remained in committee since they were introduced in late January of 2024 and early March of 2023, respectively

**Whereas**, it is the judgment of Council that these bills demonstrate a common sense approach to abating the Commonwealth’s nursing shortage consistent with HAP’s recommendations, and should be advanced and enacted with all deliberate speed;

***The Council of the County of Allegheny therefore hereby moves as follows:***

That Allegheny County Council hereby urges the enactment of HB 1825 and SB 25, currently pending before the Pennsylvania General Assembly, with all deliberate speed.