



LD 119 An Act To Increase Faculty in Nursing Education Programs by Amending the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program

Testimony in Support

February 9, 2021

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts and members of the Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business Committee my name is Tracey Bonney Corson. I am the Vice President of Nursing for Northern Light Sebasticook Valley Hospital and I am here today providing testimony on behalf of Northern Light Health and our member organizations to speak in support of this bill. Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern, and northern Maine, 8 nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy and a statewide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with over 12,000 employees statewide.

Nursing leaders throughout Northern Light Health are working with nursing education programs in Maine to increase the number of nursing students needed to meet nursing workforce demand. Northern Light Health employs 2734 nurses statewide and we are currently recruiting for 300 registered nurses to fill vacant positions and additional nurses needed to meet patient care needs.

The examples below provide an overview of our collaborative work with nursing education programs. It is helpful for you to understand that "Grow Your Own" partnerships allow nursing students to have clinical experiences at a rural hospital with the support of hospital clinical instructors and attend nursing program lecture courses via technology so the students can complete nursing education programs at the local hospital.

- **Eastern Maine Medical Center**
 - Development of a Dedicated Education Units that partner Northern Light EMMC staff nurses as clinical preceptors with a clinical instructor which enables the schools to increase clinical placements by 50%. This partnership is currently between the University of Maine at Orono, Husson University and Eastern Maine Community College. The education units have increased the number of clinical hours that student nurses complete as all nursing students within the dedicated education units are exposed to 12 hours shifts. This allows for a full immersion experience into the role of professional nursing.

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Northern Light Health

Acadia Hospital
A.R. Gould Hospital
Beacon Health
Blue Hill Hospital
C.A. Dean Hospital
Eastern Maine Medical Center
Home Care & Hospice
Inland Hospital
Maine Coast Hospital
Mercy Hospital
Northern Light Health Foundation
Sebasticook Valley Hospital

- Partnership with Eastern Maine Community College in developed an Education Simulation Center for staff and students to gain additional clinical comfort and experience through the use of simulation of clinical tasks and assessment.
- Partnered to expand Beal College’s new nursing program through non-traditional access to clinical rotations.
- **Sebasticook Valley Hospital**
 - “Grow Your Own” nursing program in partnership with Eastern Maine Community College with SVH providing the clinical instructors for 7 students.
 - SVH also offers two paid Nurse externships each summer.
 - SVH hosts nursing students from the University Nursing programs in Augusta, Portland and Orono, community college programs in Bangor and Fairfield.
- **Charles A. Dean Memorial Hospital**
 - “Grow Your Own” nursing program in partnership with Eastern Maine Community College supporting 3 students.
- **Inland Hospital**
 - Hosts nursing students from Kennebec Valley Community College, Purdue Global, the University of Maine at Augusta and occasionally other nursing programs for clinical experiences and partnerships.
- **Maine Coast Hospital/Blue Hill Hospital**
 - “Grow Your Own” nursing program in partnership with Eastern Maine Community College
- **Mayo Regional Hospital**
 - “Grow Your Own” nursing program in partnership with Eastern Maine Community College graduated 7 nurses out of the program last May and hired 6 of them at Mayo. Planning a second cohort next fall and plan to have 8 nursing students.
 - Mayo hosts nursing students for clinicals and partnerships from University of Maine programs in Orono, Ft Kent, and Augusta. Also host nursing students from Husson University, Purdue Global, and Beal.
 - Nursing faculty bring Certified Nursing Assistant students to Mayo for clinical experiences from Dover/Dexter Adult ED and Tri-County Technical Center (TCTC).
- **AR Gould Hospital**
 - Grow your own nursing programs in collaboration with Northern Maine Community College.
 - Hosts nursing students from Northern Maine Community College and the University of Maine at Fort Kent.
 - We offer paid internships within Surgical Services in which nursing students are able to work on school vacations and other free time.
 - We encourage our staff to work as instructors for the local educational institutions, so staff and students are comfortable when on the units
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- **Mercy Hospital**

- Hosts clinical groups and senior partnership students from University of Southern Maine, University of New England, St. Joseph's College of Maine, Southern Maine Community College, University of Maine, University of Maine at Fort Kent, and Husson University.
- Encourages its experienced registered nurses to become employed on a per diem basis by local colleges and universities to serve as clinical faculty.
- **Acadia Hospital**
 - Hosts clinical groups and senior partnership students from Schools of Nursing throughout the State in both BSN and ADN programs.
 - Encourages experienced registered nurses to teach clinical for local schools of nursing helping bridge the gap between education and facility practice.
 - Promotes Professional Development by offering Preceptor courses to experienced RN's who are then identified to work specifically with students during clinical rotations and partnerships.

Additionally, all member organizations collaborate with academic partners through hosting clinical experiences, junior and preceptor programs.

We are proud of our work to support increasing student capacity and have reach a point where additional growth requires additional faculty. As you have heard today Maine nursing programs are fundamentally challenged to meet workforce demand due to the current and expanding shortage of nursing faculty. With your support for this program we will have an essential resource to recruit and retain nursing faculty statewide.

Thank you.