

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1343

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations Subcommittee on Health & Human Services

Title: An act relating to the additional surcharge imposed on registered nurses and licensed practical nurses.

Brief Description: Removing the expiration for the additional surcharge imposed on registered nurses and licensed practical nurses.

Sponsors: Representatives Cody, Johnson, Moeller, Walsh, Morrell, Schmick, Green and Moscoso.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations Subcommittee on Health & Human Services: 2/6/13, 2/14/13 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Removes the June 30, 2013, expiration date for the \$5 additional surcharge placed on license applications and renewals for registered nurses and licensed practical nurses.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Morrell, Chair; Harris, Ranking Minority Member; Cody, Green, Jinkins, Kagi, Ormsby, Pike, Ross and Schmick.

Staff: Mary Mulholland (786-7391).

Background:

In 2005 the Legislature created the Nursing Resource Center Account (Account) and authorized the Account to be funded through an additional \$5 surcharge on the license applications and renewals of registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Legislature directed the Department of Health (DOH) to award grants from the Account to a nonprofit organization that is led by nurses and coordinates with representatives of different nursing organizations. The grantee organization must use the funds to monitor, study, and promote the nursing profession. The DOH awarded the grant to the Washington Center for Nursing (WCN).

The 2005 legislation also required the DOH to review the program by June 30, 2012, and make recommendations on whether the program should continue. In July 2012 the DOH published its review of the program. The review concluded that the WCN has met the statutory requirements for the use of surcharge funds, and recommended the following to the Legislature: (1) continue the \$5 surcharge for RNs and LPNs to support a central nursing resource center; (2) continue issuing grants to a nonprofit nursing center, funded by the surcharge, as a way to complete activities identified by the Legislature; and (3) revise the activities the Legislature should expect from a nonprofit nursing center to reflect and align with trends in public health and the health care delivery system.

The \$5 surcharge and the authorization to use its revenue to support a central nursing resource center expire on June 30, 2013.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The bill removes the June 30, 2013, expiration date for the \$5 surcharge placed on RN and LPN annual licenses and renewals for the support of a central nursing resource center.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill added an emergency clause.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The WCN has been successful over the past nine years. The Secretary of the DOH has recommended that the surcharge continue. The WCN's work supports public health in Washington State as well as nursing students and the nursing profession. The WCN has been a good fiscal steward of surcharge revenue. The surcharge revenue enables the WCN to access private funds and does not affect the State General Fund. Washington is a model for other states in ensuring that there is an adequate nursing workforce. The WCN

also brings together diverse constituents within the nursing workforce and gathers information that helps policymakers make decisions.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Linda Tieman, Washington Center for Nursing; Sofia Aragon, Washington State Nurses Association; and Ellie Menzies, Service Employees International Union Local 1199 Northwest.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.