STATE OF NEW YORK

7966

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

April 16, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. EACHUS -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. KAY -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to enacting the nursing education support act of 2025; and making an appropriation therefor

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "nursing education support act of 2025".

§ 2. Legislative findings and purpose. The healthcare system in New York state faces a critical shortage of registered nurses, projected to peak by the year 2030. Community colleges play a vital role in training and graduating a significant portion of the state's nursing workforce. Current funding levels for nursing programs are insufficient to meet the growing demand for qualified nursing professionals. The costs associated with nursing education-particularly clinical instruction, advanced equipment, and smaller faculty-to-student ratios-are significantly higher than for other programs. On average, nursing programs incur an additional $1,000 per semester per student in costs, which has made it difficult for community colleges to expand their programs. Sustained expansion of nursing programs requires operational funding to support faculty and staff hiring, maintain facilities, and meet growing student needs.

The purpose of this act is to allocate additional funds to nursing programs at community colleges across New York state to expand capacity, improve program quality, and ensure a robust pipeline of skilled nurses to meet the state's healthcare needs.

§ 3. The education law is amended by adding a new article 127-A to read as follows:

ARTICLE 127-A

NURSING EDUCATION SUPPORT ACT OF 2025

Section 6360. Definitions.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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6361. Nursing education support program.
6362. Reporting.

§ 6360. Definitions. As used in this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. "Community college" shall mean any institution within the city university of New York (CUNY) or state university of New York (SUNY) systems offering associate degrees in nursing.

2. "Nursing program" means an accredited program that trains individuals to become licensed practical nurses (LPNs) or registered nurses (RNs).

§ 6361. Nursing education support program. 1. The commissioner shall establish, within amounts appropriated therefor, a nursing education support program.

2. Such program shall expend funds to assist community colleges and students as determined by the commissioner for the following purposes:

(a) Expanding student enrollment capacity in nursing programs at community colleges.

(b) Hiring additional faculty and staff at community colleges to support increased enrollment.

(c) Modernizing community college equipment and facilities for nursing education.

(d) Providing scholarships or grants for students pursuing nursing degrees, particularly those from underrepresented communities as determined by the commissioner.

(e) Covering the additional per semester per student costs associated with running nursing programs to promote the growth of such programs.

(f) Establishing partnerships with healthcare facilities for clinical training opportunities.

§ 6362. Reporting. 1. Community colleges receiving funding pursuant to this article shall submit an annual report to the department detailing:

(a) The number of nursing students enrolled and graduated.

(b) Use of allocated funds and outcomes achieved.

(c) Plans for future expansion or improvements to the nursing program.

(d) How funds have been utilized to ensure sustained program growth.

2. The department shall annually prepare and submit a report to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly. Such report shall provide recommendations on the ways in which the nursing education support program established pursuant to this article can be improved to further ensure sustained expansion of nursing programs at community colleges to meet the state's healthcare needs. Each annual report shall be made publicly accessible on the website of the department.

§ 4. The sum of twenty-five million dollars ($25,000,000), or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated to the department of education out of any moneys in the state treasury in the general fund, not otherwise appropriated, and made immediately available, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act. Such moneys shall be payable on the audit and warrant of the comptroller on vouchers certified or approved by the commissioner of education in the manner prescribed by law.

§ 5. Severability clause. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judg-

ment shall have been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the legislature that this act would have been enacted even if such invalid provisions had not been included herein.

§ 6. This act shall take effect immediately.