

Jane Conway

From: Jane Conway
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 1:11 PM
To: Jane Conway
Subject: SB166

From: Tina DeLapp [mailto:tdelapp@ak.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 10:19 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel
Subject: SB166

Senator Giessel –

I am concerned about the lack of limits regarding the nurse educator representative on the board of nursing. I have no problem expanding the types of programs from which this representative can be selected; the current limit to a baccalaureate educator has prevented a number of very capable people from being appointed to the Board. However, in recent years, three different associate degree programs have received or sought approval from the Board of Nursing. It is my understanding that one of those programs recently graduated its first class – with only one graduate being able to pass the licensure exam. A proposed curriculum from another program proposed a total degree requirement of 70 quarter credits when 108 credits would be more normal and appropriate; 70 is the norm for programs on a semester system; the then director of that program later moved to another institution interested in starting an associate degree nursing program (though she has already left).

Alaska is one of the few states that relies on a board member to provide expertise in nursing education – most states have a staff member who is responsible for monitoring nursing education programs and reporting back to the board, which ultimately maintains responsibility for approving or not approving programs. Ideally the Alaska Board would also employ a full or part time education consultant. However, given the small number of licensees in Alaska, relying on the expertise of a Board member is probably the only option for the state.

Requiring that the nurse educator representative come from a program with national accreditation would ensure that the individual in that role would have knowledge of national nursing education standards. For now, such a requirement would limit education representative candidate to faculty associate with the UAA School of Nursing. However, in the future, I have no doubt that some of the emerging programs will achieve national accreditation.

I was also distressed to see no inclusion of Clinical Nurse Specialists in the revised statute – although that is certainly an issue that could be addressed in future legislation. As a health consumer in the state, I believe the lack of CNS specifications in the state's nurse practice act limits the quality of health care available to Alaskans.

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