

110TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 677

To provide for a study by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences to identify constraints encountered by schools of nursing in admitting and graduating the number of nurses sufficient to meet the health care needs of the United States, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 24, 2007

Mr. HOLT (for himself, Mr. McNULTY, Ms. BORDALLO, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. McDERMOTT, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. WOOLSEY, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. CONYERS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To provide for a study by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences to identify constraints encountered by schools of nursing in admitting and graduating the number of nurses sufficient to meet the health care needs of the United States, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Nursing School Capac-  
5       ity Act of 2007”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds as follows:

3 (1) Researchers in the field of public health  
4 have identified the need for a national study to iden-  
5 tify constraints encountered by schools of nursing in  
6 graduating the number of nurses sufficient to meet  
7 the health care needs of the United States.

8 (2) The shortage of qualified registered nurses  
9 has adversely affected the health care system of the  
10 United States.

11 (3) Individual States have had varying degrees  
12 of success with programs designed to increase the  
13 recruitment and retention of nurses.

14 (4) Schools of nursing have been unable to pro-  
15 vide a sufficient number of qualified graduates to  
16 meet the workforce needs.

17 (5) Many nurses are approaching the age of re-  
18 tirement, and the problem worsens each year.

19 (6) In 2004, an estimated 125,000 applications  
20 from qualified applicants were rejected by schools of  
21 nursing, due to a shortage of faculty and a lack of  
22 capacity for additional students.

23 **SEC. 3. STUDY WITH RESPECT TO CONSTRAINTS WITH RE-**  
24 **SPECT TO SCHOOLS OF NURSING.**

25 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and  
26 Human Services shall request the Institute of Medicine

1 of the National Academy of Sciences to enter into an  
2 agreement under which the Institute conducts a study for  
3 the purpose of—

4           (1) identifying constraints encountered by  
5 schools of nursing in admitting and graduating the  
6 number of registered nurses necessary to ensure pa-  
7 tient safety and meet the need for quality assurance  
8 in the provision of health care; and

9           (2) developing recommendations to alleviate the  
10 constraints on a short-term and long-term basis.

11       (b) CERTAIN COMPONENTS.—The Secretary shall en-  
12 sure that the agreement under subsection (a) provides  
13 that the study under such subsection will include informa-  
14 tion on the following:

15           (1) The trends in applications for attendance at  
16 schools of nursing that are relevant to the purpose  
17 described in such subsection, including trends re-  
18 garding applicants who are accepted for enrollment  
19 and applicants who are not accepted, particularly  
20 qualified applicants who are not accepted.

21           (2) The number and demographic characteris-  
22 tics of entry-level and graduate students currently  
23 enrolled in schools of nursing, the retention rates at  
24 the schools, and the number of recent graduates  
25 from the schools, as compared to previous years and

1 to the projected need for registered nurses based on  
2 two-year, five-year, and ten-year projections.

3 (3) The number and demographic characteris-  
4 tics of nurses who pursue graduate education in  
5 nursing and non-nursing programs but do not pur-  
6 sue faculty positions in schools of nursing, the rea-  
7 sons therefor, including any regulatory barriers to  
8 choosing to pursue such positions, and the effect of  
9 such decisions on the ability of the schools to obtain  
10 adequate numbers of faculty members.

11 (4) The extent to which entry-level graduates of  
12 the schools are satisfied with their educational prep-  
13 aration, including their participation in nurse  
14 externships, internships, and residency programs,  
15 and to which they are able to effectively transition  
16 into the nursing workforce.

17 (5) The satisfaction of nurse managers and ad-  
18 ministrators with respect to the preparation and per-  
19 formance levels of entry-level graduates from the  
20 schools after one year, three years, and five years of  
21 practice, respectively.

22 (6) The extent to which the current salary, ben-  
23 efit structures, and characteristics of the workplace,  
24 including the number of nurses who are presently

1 serving in faculty positions, influence the career path  
2 of nurses who have pursued graduate education.

3 (7) The extent to which the use of innovative  
4 technologies for didactic and clinical nursing edu-  
5 cation might provide for an increase in the ability of  
6 schools of nursing to train qualified nurses.

7 (c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Recommendations under  
8 subsection (a)(2) may include recommendations for legis-  
9 lative or administrative changes at the Federal or State  
10 level, and measures that can be taken in the private sec-  
11 tor—

12 (1) to facilitate the recruitment of students into  
13 the nursing profession;

14 (2) to facilitate the retention of nurses in the  
15 workplace; and

16 (3) to improve the resources and ability of the  
17 education and health care systems to prepare a suf-  
18 ficient number of qualified registered nurses.

19 (d) METHODOLOGY OF STUDY.—

20 (1) SCOPE.—The Secretary shall ensure that  
21 the agreement under subsection (a) provides that the  
22 study under such subsection will consider the per-  
23 spectives of nurses and physicians in each of the  
24 various types of inpatient, outpatient, and residential  
25 facilities in the health care delivery system; faculty

1 and administrators of schools of nursing; providers  
2 of health plans or health insurance; and consumers.

3 (2) CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT ORGANIZA-  
4 TION.—The Secretary shall ensure that the agree-  
5 ment under subsection (a) provides that relevant  
6 agencies and organizations with expertise on the  
7 nursing shortage will be consulted with respect to  
8 the study under such subsection, including but not  
9 limited to the following:

10 (A) The Agency for Healthcare Research  
11 and Quality.

12 (B) The American Academy of Nursing.

13 (C) The American Association of Colleges  
14 of Nursing.

15 (D) The American Nurses Association.

16 (E) The American Organization of Nurse  
17 Executives.

18 (F) The National Institute of Nursing Re-  
19 search.

20 (G) The National League for Nursing.

21 (H) The National Organization for Asso-  
22 ciate Degree Nursing.

23 (I) The National Student Nurses Associa-  
24 tion.

1       (e) REPORT.—The Secretary shall ensure that the  
2 agreement under subsection (a) provides that not later  
3 than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this  
4 Act, a report providing the findings and recommendations  
5 made in the study under such subsection will be submitted  
6 to the Secretary, the Committee on Energy and Commerce  
7 of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on  
8 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate.

9       (f) OTHER ORGANIZATION.—If the Institute declines  
10 to conduct the study under subsection (a), the Secretary  
11 may enter into an agreement with another appropriate pri-  
12 vate entity to conduct the study.

13       (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
14 are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be  
15 necessary to carry out this section.

16 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

17       For purposes of this Act:

18               (1) The term “Institute” means the Institute of  
19 Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences.

20               (2)(A) The term “school of nursing” means a  
21 collegiate, associate degree, or diploma school of  
22 nursing in a State.

23               (B) The terms “collegiate school of nursing”,  
24 “associate degree school of nursing”, and “diploma  
25 school of nursing” have the meanings given to such

1 terms in section 801 of the Public Health Service  
2 Act.

3 (3) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary  
4 of Health and Human Services.

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