



The Stop Nurse Shortages Act

The Problem:

The United States faces a shortage of nurses. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics projects 194,500 average annual openings for registered nurses (RNs) between 2021 and 2031. In 2020, the average age for RNs was 52 years old with more than twenty percent planning to retire within the next five years.

This problem is exacerbated by shortages in nursing faculty and clinical sites. In 2021 U.S. nursing schools turned away 91,938 qualified applications from baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs due to an insufficient number of faculty, clinical sites, clinical preceptors, and budget constraints. In addition, a total of 1,965 faculty vacancies were identified in a survey of 935 nursing schools with baccalaureate and/or graduate programs across the country.

The Solution:

One path to help ensure we have a sufficient supply of highly qualified RNs and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) is through supporting accelerated nursing programs. These programs offer an opportunity for those who have a degree in a non-nursing field to join the frontlines of our health care system as part of the nursing workforce.

Accelerated nursing programs accomplish programmatic objectives in a short time by building on previous learning experiences, while maintaining the same number of clinical hours as their counterparts in traditional nursing programs. Many students are attracted to the fast-track programs as the natural next step in their higher education. Graduates of accelerated programs are prized by nurse employers who value the many layers of skill and education these graduates bring to the workplace.

To help fight the national nurse shortage, we must increase our support for such programs.

Legislation:

That is why Reps. Haley Stevens and David Joyce introduced the Stop Nurse Shortages Act. This legislation authorizes a \$10 million/year grant program allowing nursing schools to create, expand or support an accelerated nursing degree program. To increase the number of graduating nurses through these programs, nursing schools will be able to use grants to:

- Hire and retain faculty and preceptors;
- Increase the number of clinical trainings sites; or
- Offer financial assistance to students.

Endorsements:

American Association of Colleges of Nursing, National League for Nursing, American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology, Michigan Hospital Association