

RESOLUTION #15-416 - 10/8/15

SUPPORT STATE LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING MINIMUM NURSE
STAFFING STANDARDS FOR HOSPITALS AND AMBULATORY
SURGERY FACILITIES AND CERTAIN DHS FACILITIES

WHEREAS, it is paramount that residents of the Township of Neptune have access to quality health care services; and,

WHEREAS, nurse staffing shortages are a factor in one out of every four unexpected hospital deaths or injuries caused by error and unsafe staffing levels negatively affect retention of nursing staff, lead to greater turnover of nursing staff, and thus undermine continuity and quality of patient care; and,

WHEREAS, multiple peer-reviewed studies of American and European health facilities undertaken over the last decade show a direct link between nurse staffing levels and key patient outcomes. A 2014 study by Dr. Linda Aiken and her colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania showed that a single patient increase in a nurse's workload increased the likelihood of an in-patient death within 30 days of admission by 7 percent, and a 2007 report by Dr. Robert L. Kane showed that mortality risk decreases by 9 percent for intensive care unit (ICU) patients and 16 percent for surgery patients with the increase of 1 full-time employed, registered nurse per patient day; and,

WHEREAS, a 2009 study titled "The Economic Value of Professional Nursing", published in the journal Medical Care, found that adding an additional 133,000 registered nurses to the U.S. hospital workforce would produce medical savings estimated at \$6.1 billion in reduced patient care costs; and,

WHEREAS, current hospital regulations in New Jersey, setting only limited staffing levels, have not been updated since 1987, and do not adequately reflect modern technologies, current standards in patient care, and reduced hospital stays; and,

WHEREAS, legislation (S1183/A647) introduced and currently under consideration by the New Jersey State Legislature would set minimum nurse staffing standards for hospitals and other medical facilities that would increase the quality of health care services at hospitals, ambulatory surgery facilities, and certain facilities under the purview of the State Department of Human Services; and,

WHEREAS, passage of S1183/A647 would require higher nurse-to-patient ratios at hospitals and ambulatory surgery facilities, including Jersey Shore University Medical Center, thus leading to a higher quality of patient care overall,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Committee of the Township of Neptune hereby urges passage of S1183/A647 and supports establishing minimum registered professional nurse staffing standards for hospitals and ambulatory surgery facilities and certain DHS facilities to increase the quality of patient care at Neptune Township health facilities and those across the State of New Jersey; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to State Senator Jennifer Beck, and State Assemblywomen Mary Pat Angelini and Caroline Casagrande.