

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003**

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 142

Sponsors: Senators Forrester, Purcell; Allran, Apodaca, Ballantine, Bingham, Blake, Carpenter, Dannelly, Dorsett, Foxx, Garwood, Gulley, Hartsell, Holloman, Hoyle, Kinnaird, Lucas, Pittenger, Rucho, and Shubert.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

February 24, 2003

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
2 COMMISSION TO STUDY THE NURSING SHORTAGE.

3 Whereas, a study published in the Journal of the American Medical
4 Association (JAMA) revealed that between 1983 and 1998 the average age of working
5 Registered Nurses increased by 4.5 years to 41.9; and

6 Whereas, the JAMA study indicated that 35% fewer full-time Registered
7 Nurses are observed today when compared to similar age groups of Registered Nurses
8 entering the workforce 20 years ago; and

9 Whereas, according to the JAMA study, within 10 years, 40% of working
10 Registered Nurses will be 50 years or older and, as those nurses retire, the supply of
11 working Registered Nurses is projected to be 20% below requirements by the year
12 2020; and

13 Whereas, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that jobs for Registered
14 Nurses will grow 23% by 2008; and

15 Whereas, according to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, RN
16 enrollments in schools of nursing are down, and in the fall of 2000, entry-level BSN
17 enrollment fell by 2.1%, dropping for the sixth year in a row; and

18 Whereas, physician respondents in a recent survey by the Harvard School of
19 Public Health indicated that among the leading causes of medical errors are a shortage
20 of nurses; Now, therefore,

21 Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

22 **SECTION 1.** The Legislative Research Commission may study the reasons
23 for the nursing shortage and the impact the shortage has on quality of health care in this
24 State. The study may include recommendations to increase the supply of nurses, school
25 nurses, nursing program faculty, and the amount of funds needed in the Nursing
26 Scholars Program to reduce the nursing shortage. In conducting the study, the
27 Commission shall consult with representatives of the following: North Carolina
28 Community Colleges, the North Carolina Hospital Association, the North Carolina Area

1 Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program, the North Carolina Nurses Association, the
2 North Carolina Institute of Medicine Task Force on the North Carolina Nursing
3 Workforce, the North Carolina Center for Nursing, the North Carolina Board of
4 Nursing, the North Carolina Associate Degree Nursing Council, and any other related
5 organizations.

6 **SECTION 2.** The Legislative Research Commission may make an interim
7 report to the 2003 General Assembly, 2004 Regular Session, and shall make its final
8 report to the 2005 General Assembly.

9 **SECTION 3.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.