



SUMMARY

Assembly Bill (AB) 1400 would direct the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to establish a pilot program to allow up to 15 community college districts to offer a Bachelor of Science in nursing degree.

BACKGROUND

One of the most significant consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in California has been an unprecedented nursing shortage. The trauma of the pandemic has led to many nurses retiring or choosing other professions due to burnout, fatigue, and mental health issues. This has left a gap in our healthcare system, which our current workforce development systems are not designed to fix. California is projected to be short over 44,000 registered nurses by 2030. These shortages are being felt most acutely in impoverished and rural parts of the state.

California’s current healthcare workforce development apparatus is not equipped to handle the growing nursing needs of the state, especially in disadvantaged communities in more rural parts of the state. While California’s Community College system does offer associates degrees in nursing, the needs of the healthcare workforce more frequently demand a bachelor’s degree. This level of degree is exclusive in California to private institutions that are prohibitively expensive or the UC and CSU systems that have limited capacity and difficulty serving areas of the state with the highest need.

THIS BILL

In order to meet our nursing workforce needs and extend these career opportunities to Californians throughout the state, we must expand the role of our community college system. AB 1400 will take the first steps in this process by allowing a limited number of campuses to expand their nursing programs to offer Bachelors of Science in nursing degree. This will expand the access and affordability of these degrees and demonstrate how these offerings might be expanded further to additional community college campuses.

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