HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 2255 FILED ON: 2/17/2021

HOUSE . . . . . No. 2257

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

***Michael S. Day*, (BY REQUEST)**

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to encourage, and improve, the level of availability of nursing staff.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Vincent Lawrence Dixon	*60 Lake Street-Unit N, Winchester, MA 01890*	*2/17/2021*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 2257

By Mr. Day of Stoneham (by request), a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 2257) of Vincent Lawrence Dixon for legislation to authorizes the Executive Office of Health and Human Service and the Department of Public Health to create a nursing scholarship program. Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)

An Act to encourage, and improve, the level of availability of nursing staff.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. The Massachusetts General Laws are hereby amended by inserting the following new chapter:

PURPOSE – A variety of circumstances, having developed in recent years, have led to the erosion of staffing levels, among nursing, and health care workers. These circumstances have included the migration of some such workers, into other fields; the retirement of many, and other factors including work loads, and compensation levels.

Recent events, particularly the COVID-19 Pandemic, and other factors, have led to the death of many nurses, and other health care workers, further adding to the significant shortage of such staff.

In addition, profound changes in medical treatment modalities, significant lengthening of life spans, of many; and newer recognized diseases, and conditions, have meant that there are some increases in the need for nurses, and related health care workers.

Significantly, Massachusetts has become a world leader in medicine, and health care, and attracts substantial numbers of patients, from across The United States and the World.

Thus, it has become clear that a shortage of nurses, and related health care workers, is worsening, and is likely to worsen further; adding to crisis type risks, and actual crisis circumstances, in the health care system of our Commonwealth; over a span of some years, going forward. This statute has as its purpose, to address, and help to remedy, these shortages; and provide additional mechanisms, by which individuals, and institutions, can recruit, train, employ, and otherwise stabilize, and seek to improve the nursing, and health care work force.

SECTION 2 – This legislation authorizes the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, and under it, the Department of Public Health, to create a Nursing Scholarship Program.

2a.) This Nursing Scholarship Program (NSP), shall provide a mechanism for all qualified students, who wish to enroll in an accredited Nursing Program, operated within The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to receive specific assistance in obtaining grant, and/or scholarship aid, to compensate their educational, and related costs, as long as they meet certain specified standards.

2b.) Those students receiving assistance through the Nursing Scholarship Program (NSP), shall attend at least half-time, and preferably full-time, during their academic, and clinical training.

2c.) Such eligible students, shall, upon graduation, commit to no less than two (2) years of full-time service, in a qualified medical institution, and/or health care facility, within the boundaries of Massachusetts, as may be further defined.

SECTION 3 – All such eligible Nursing Scholarship Program (NSP) students, shall receive up to four (4) years of complete tuition compensation, during their studies in an accredited Bachelor of Science, Nursing Degree Program.

3a.) The Department of Public Health, is authorized to develop such program, and may, as needed, intersect with other agencies of the Commonwealth, to develop additional related standards.

3b.) Detailed records, for students in the program, shall be kept, processed, analyzed, and further reported, together with useful recommendations, for the refinement of the program. This public report, shall be done on a yearly basis.