

HOUSE No. 3620

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:
<i>Vincent L. Dixon</i>	<i>60 Lake St. Unit N Winchester Massachusetts 01890</i>	<i>1/20/2023</i>

HOUSE No. 3620

By Representative Day of Stoneham (by request), a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 3620) of Vincent L. Dixon relative to nursing and health care worker staffing levels. Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

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:

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

3 PURPOSE – A variety of circumstances, having developed in recent years, have led to
4 the serious erosion of staffing levels, among nursing, and health care workers. These
5 circumstances have included the migration of many such workers, into other fields; the
6 retirement of many, and other factors including pressure on work loads, and challenged
7 compensation levels; leading to what, in effect, is a health care system emergency, and crisis.

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

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

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

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

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

25 2a.) This Nursing Scholarship Program (NSP), shall provide a mechanism for all
26 qualified students, who wish to enroll in an accredited Nursing Program, operated within The
27 Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to receive specific assistance in obtaining grant, and/or
28 scholarship aid, to compensate their educational, and related costs, as long as they meet certain
29 specified standards.

30 2b.) Those students receiving assistance through the Nursing Scholarship Program (NSP),
31 shall attend at least half-time, and preferably full-time, during their academic, and clinical
32 training.

33 2c.) Such eligible students, shall, upon graduation, commit to no less than two (2) years
34 of full-time service, in a qualified medical institution, and/or health care facility, within the
35 boundaries of Massachusetts, as may be further defined.

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

39 3a.) The Department of Public Health, is authorized to develop such program, and may,
40 as needed, intersect with other agencies of the Commonwealth, to develop additional related
41 standards.

42 3b.) Detailed records, for students in the program, shall be kept, processed, analyzed, and
43 further reported, together with useful recommendations, for the refinement of the program. This
44 public report, shall be done on a yearly basis.