Arizona Health Care Workforce Development Act
Addressing State Shortage Approved by House

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – State Representative Joanne Osborne announced that the House today approved HB 2691, the Arizona Health Care Workforce Development Act, which she has sponsored to address Arizona’s severe healthcare workforce shortage.

“Arizona’s future and high quality of life requires that we have a strong healthcare delivery system,” said Representative Osborne, Chair of the House Health and Human Services Committee. “The success of that system rests on having a well-trained and experienced professional nursing workforce. Right now, Arizona’s healthcare system is threatened by a severe nursing shortage and immediate action is required to fix it. Key provisions of HB 2691 address the problem by expanding capacity at our state’s nursing education programs to dramatically grow the number of new graduates and fill our nursing pipeline.

“Additionally, the bill supports the training and development of new physicians, dentists, advanced practice nurses, and physician assistants by establishing a grant program to grow preceptorship programs for these professions. It also seeks to address the shortage of behavioral health professionals by developing entry level and career path Behavioral Health certificates, Associate degrees, and pathways for bachelor’s degree program progression.”

Provisions of HB 2691:

- Establishes the Arizona Nurse Education Investment Program to increase the capacity of nursing education programs in this state by fostering collaboration among the state’s education and healthcare communities. The program shall address this state’s nursing shortage by increasing the number of all levels of nurses graduating from this state’s nursing education programs by the end of FY 2024-2025 from the number graduating in FY 2021-2022.
- Creates a grant program through the Arizona Department of Health Services to expand the capacity of preceptor training for nurse students and new nurse graduates.
- Establishes the Nurse Transition to Practice Program to better support and develop new nurses, provide evidence-based professional development, and accelerate the novice nurse to a competent nurse more rapidly.
- Creates a grant program to encourage and support more preceptorships for the training and development of graduate students to become new physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, dentists, and physician assistants in the state.
• Establishes a pilot program to develop and expand capacity of behavioral health programs at community colleges and cover tuition, fees and related educational expenses of eligible students.
• Provide transparency to ensure our military members get credit for their experience and skills developed during their service to our country.

HB 2691 will now go to the Senate for consideration.

Joanne Osborne is a Republican member of the Arizona House of Representatives serving Legislative District 13. Follow her on Twitter at @JoanneOsborne8.

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