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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2008

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- CENTER FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACT

Introduced By: Senators Pichardo, Miller, Perry, and Metts

Date Introduced: February 26, 2008

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 23 of the General Laws entitled "Health and Safety" is hereby  
2 amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 17.21

4 CENTER FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS

5 **23-17.21-1. Legislative findings.** – The general assembly finds and declares that:

6 (a) there is a growing shortage of qualified nurses and healthcare professionals available  
7 to meet the needs of patients in healthcare facilities in Rhode Island as documented in the report  
8 “Help wanted: The growing crisis in Rhode Island’s nursing workforce” prepared by Rhode  
9 Island shape foundation;

10 (b) healthcare facilities serving the citizens of the state are experiencing increasing  
11 difficulty in attracting nurses to administer to their patients;

12 (c) quality healthcare depends, in part, on the availability of nurses and healthcare  
13 professionals;

14 (d) it is in the public interest and essential to the welfare and well-being of the inhabitants  
15 of the state that there be a sufficient number of nurses and healthcare workers in the state to serve  
16 the healthcare needs of patients; and

17 (e) it is vital to the welfare of the state’s citizenry that incentives be provided to attract  
18 and retain nurses and healthcare professionals to provide service in healthcare facilities  
19 throughout the state.

1           **23-17.21-2. Center for health professions established.** – There is hereby created a  
2 center for health professions under the auspices of the health partnership council of Rhode Island  
3 for the purpose of developing a sufficient, diverse, and well trained healthcare workforces to  
4 ensure the citizens of Rhode Island continue to have access to high quality healthcare.

5           **23-17.21-3. Responsibilities of the center for health professions.** – (a) The center for  
6 health professions will coordinate, facilitate and communicate statewide efforts to meet supply  
7 and demand needs for Rhode Island’s healthcare workforce. The initial focus for the center shall  
8 include nursing which is experiencing the greatest workforce shortages.

9           (b) The center shall further focus on:

10           (1) Data collection to support strategic decisions and policy recommendations to measure  
11 and evaluate efforts over time and to certify on an ongoing basis:

12           (i) Current health care professions supply and demand;

13           (ii) Future supply and demand; and

14           (iii) Gap analysis.

15           (2) Education and training to ensure Rhode Island’s current education and training  
16 systems have the resources to adequately support workforce demand and establish the centralized  
17 clinical placement registry to move students through the postsecondary education pipeline in an  
18 efficient manner.

19           (3) Recruitment to increase the level of awareness and diversity of the healthcare  
20 workforce.

21           (4) Research, design and implement creative retention initiatives which will assist the  
22 state of Rhode Island retain its healthcare professionals.

23           (c) The center for health professions shall serve as a repository for healthcare workforce  
24 data and provide professional development opportunities and research best practices with the goal  
25 of streamlining both public and private resources and eliminating duplication of effort.

26           (d) The center may accept funding that includes, but is not limited to monetary  
27 contributions, contractual arrangements, in-kind services, federal and state workforce  
28 development appropriated funds, private and public foundation grants and fees for service  
29 products.

30           SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- CENTER FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACT

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1           This act would create a center for health professionals for the development of a  
2 healthcare workforce.

3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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