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LA County Board of Supervisors Unanimously Votes to Support Senator Richard Roth's *More Pathways to Nursing* Legislation

LOS ANGELES (March 20, 2024) — The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, in the nation's most populous county, today unanimously voted to support Senator Richard D. Roth's (D-Riverside) transformative ***More Pathways to Nursing*** legislation, Senate Bill (SB) 895, to create a pilot program for community colleges to offer Bachelor's of Nursing Degrees. SB 895 will be heard by the Senate Committee on Education, Wednesday, April 10th.

The motion authored by Supervisor Hilda Solis (D-Los Angeles) directs Los Angeles County's Chief Executive Office – Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Branch to support Senator Roth's SB 895.

"Across the State of California, nursing shortages continue to impact healthcare delivery," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, First District. "During the COVID-19 pandemic, many nurses close to retirement decided to leave earlier than anticipated. There were also groups of nurses leaving California – taking their skills and knowledge with them to other states with lower costs of living. And then some nurses decided to leave the profession altogether because of the burnout they experienced firsthand. This is an issue of equity, and it is timely that we meet our demand for this critical workforce."

"First, I want to thank Supervisor Solis for authoring this motion and to her colleagues for their strong support. For decades, California has suffered from a shortage of Registered Nurses, and this problem has been exacerbated in recent years due to the pandemic and it's expected to worsen due to an increase in RN retirements. While the nursing shortage is a national problem, it is particularly acute here in our state—ranking 40th out of 50 states. But there is a path forward to help solve this problem and that path cuts right through our California Community Colleges. Our SB 895 creates a pilot program allowing community colleges to offer a bachelor's degree in nursing, which is increasingly the industry standard, and a requirement for employment in our hospitals," said Senator Roth.

"The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors plays a crucial role in improving the health and well-being of our communities by providing access to high-quality, affordable healthcare. This motion proposed by Supervisor Hilda Solis will strengthen support for the passage of SB 895 (Roth), which enables students to complete their Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at their local community college with already existing nursing schools," said LACCD Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D. "I thank the LA County Board of Supervisors for approving the motion to address healthcare disparities by building our capacity to train nurses. SB 895 will increase the number of nursing professionals who are ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse in underserved communities, thereby, improving healthcare access for all."

For over 40 years, the community college Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) has been the basic credential requirement for employment as an RN in a healthcare facility; and the California State University, the University of California, and private nursing schools have historically awarded BSNs to those who elect to pursue a four-year degree.

However, the healthcare workforce requirements are changing – hospitals are increasingly preferring and requiring a BSN degree for their nurses. In 2010, the Institute of Medicine issued its Future of Nursing report, which contained a set of recommendations, including the recommendation that the proportion of RNs with a BSN degree in healthcare facilities increase to 80% by 2020. In California, a 2021 Health Impact report found that 18% of California hospitals surveyed stated that a BSN was required for employment – twice the percentage noted in 2017 – and 54.3% reported a preference for hiring BSNs.

The way to bridge the BSN gap in this State is to utilize existing ADN programs at community colleges to assist CSU and UC in addressing this shortage. This bill would offer a way to close this gap by taking advantage of existing ADN programs in the State. With the difference between an ADN and a BSN being only an additional 30 units of coursework, several ADN programs are well-positioned to expand their offerings to BSN degrees.

SB 895 does this in an incremental way by creating a pilot program that authorizes the Chancellor of the Community Colleges to select up to 15 community college districts with existing nationally accredited ADN programs to offer a BSN degree to 25% of existing ADN classes, or 35 students, whichever is greater. By operating within the existing ADN program authorization, the program will not require additional supervised clinical placements and is intended to be cost-neutral.

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About the Los Angeles Community College District

We are the Colleges of Los Angeles! LACCD (www.laccd.edu) is the nation's largest community college district, educating about 200,000 students annually at its nine colleges that serve the residents of more than 36 cities and communities from 900 square miles of Los Angeles County. Since 1969, the District has been providing an important learning pathway for students seeking transfer to four-year colleges or universities while also offering two-year degrees and certificated training programs to Southern California's diverse workforce in many specialized trades and professions. Follow us on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/LACCD>, @LACCD, and on Twitter, <https://twitter.com/laccd> @laccd and Instagram, https://www.instagram.com/laccd_edu/ @laccd_edu.