

MAR 16 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE HAWAII STATE CENTER FOR NURSING TO CONDUCT A
STUDY COMPILING RECOMMENDED SAFE PATIENT STAFFING RATIOS.

1 WHEREAS, the issue of safe staffing in hospitals has
2 escalated into a growing public health concern in Hawaii and
3 other states across the nation and can no longer be defined as
4 strictly a collective bargaining issue; and
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6 WHEREAS, the nursing community is the largest segment of
7 Hawaii's health care workforce and is indispensable to the
8 health, safety, and well-being of the residents of the State;
9 and
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11 WHEREAS, as more care is delivered in outpatient or home
12 and community-based settings, the acuity of patients who are
13 admitted to hospitals has intensified, requiring significantly
14 more attention, complex monitoring, and clinical intervention by
15 frontline nurses; and
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17 WHEREAS, the Legislature commissioned the Legislative
18 Reference Bureau to conduct a comprehensive study on nurse
19 staffing pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution No. 187 (2024);
20 and
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22 WHEREAS, the Legislative Reference Bureau submitted its
23 2025 report, *Time for Triage: A Summary of Best Practices,*
24 *State Requirements, and Successful Efforts to Reduce Nurse*
25 *Staffing Shortages*, which cited several studies demonstrating
26 that patient outcomes improve with higher nurse staffing ratios,
27 or nurse-to-patient ratios, through results such as shorter
28 hospital stays, fewer complications, fewer readmissions, less
29 risk of death, reduced hospital-acquired infections, increased
30 patient satisfaction, improved patient compliance with treatment
31 plans, improved pain management, and fewer medication errors,
32 and that nurse staffing ratios may be especially important for
33 patients of color; and



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2 WHEREAS, the Joint Commission, the nation's leading health
3 care accrediting body, has established National Performance Goal
4 12, effective January 1, 2026, which formally recognizes that
5 hospital staffing levels and competencies must align with
6 patient needs as a critical component of clinical quality and
7 patient safety; and
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9 WHEREAS, data from the 2025 Hawaii Nursing Workforce Supply
10 Statewide Report and the 2026 Informational Brief on The State
11 of Hawaii's LPN and RN Workforces by the Hawaii State Center for
12 Nursing show there is an adequate number of registered nurses in
13 the islands to meet existing demand, indicating the number of
14 registered nurses statewide is not a barrier to safe staffing;
15 and
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17 WHEREAS, the Hawaii State Center for Nursing reports
18 findings from a 2023 Nursing Wellbeing, Recruitment, and
19 Retention Strategic Initiative Working Group literature review
20 that Hawaii registered nurses felt so stressed at work that they
21 considered leaving the nursing profession, and that nurses
22 increasingly indicated physical and mental health as leading
23 contributors to their desire to leave the workforce; and
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25 WHEREAS, creating supportive work environments with safe
26 staffing levels is essential to attracting the next generation
27 of nurses to Hawaii's workforce and retaining the experienced
28 nurses currently practicing in Hawaii's health care facilities;
29 and
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31 WHEREAS, transparency in staffing standards allows for
32 better-informed decision-making by health care providers,
33 policymakers, and the public; now, therefore,
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35 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
36 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,
37 that the Hawaii State Center for Nursing is requested to conduct
38 a study to compile a comprehensive list of recommended safe
39 patient staffing ratios for various hospital units and health
40 care settings; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii State Center for
2 Nursing is requested to use the specific unit-by-unit staffing
3 standards and ratio requirements outlined in House Bill No. 1865
4 (2026) and Senate Bill No. 2763 (2026) as the foundational
5 framework for the study that compiles the staffing standards
6 recommended by professional specialty organizations, including
7 but not limited to the:

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- 9 (1) American Association of Critical-Care Nurses;
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 - 11 (2) Emergency Nurses Association;
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 - 13 (3) Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal
14 Nurses;
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 - 16 (4) American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses;
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 - 18 (5) Association of periOperative Registered Nurses;
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 - 20 (6) Oncology Nursing Society;
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 - 22 (7) Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses;
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 - 24 (8) American Psychiatric Nurses Association;
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 - 26 (9) Society of Pediatric Nurses; and
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 - 28 (10) American Nephrology Nurses Association; and
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30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii State Center for
31 Nursing may, in consultation with its advisory board, include in
32 the study standards for a nursing specialty or sub-specialty
33 established or recommended by regulation or statute in other
34 states, recognized authorities in other countries, and other
35 professional associations; and

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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii State Center for
38 Nursing is requested to submit the study, including any
39 findings, recommendations, and proposed legislation, to the
40 Legislature and Department of Health and publish the study in a
41 publicly available online dashboard no later than twenty days
42 prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2027; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body urges Hawaii's health care facilities to use every effort to implement safe patient staffing ratios that reflect the standards compiled and tracked by the Hawaii State Center for Nursing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health, who in turn is requested to submit copies of this measure to the Chief Executive Officers of each hospital and health care facility licensed in the State; and the Executive Director of the Hawaii State Center for Nursing.

OFFERED BY:

A large, bold, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. J. ...', is written over a horizontal line.