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# SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE CENTER FOR NURSING TO COMPILE A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF RECOMMENDED SAFE PATIENT STAFFING RATIOS FOR ALL NURSING SPECIALTIES AND SUBSPECIALTIES ACROSS ALL HEALTH CARE SETTINGS AND TO MAINTAIN A REPOSITORY FOR THIS INFORMATION.

1           WHEREAS, the issue of safe patient staffing ratios in  
2 hospitals has escalated into a growing public health concern in  
3 Hawaii and other states across the nation and can no longer be  
4 defined as 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 H.C.R. No. 187 (2024); and

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21           WHEREAS, the Legislative Reference Bureau submitted its  
22 2025 report, *Time for Triage: A Summary of Best Practices,*  
23 *State Requirements, and Successful Efforts to Reduce Nurse*  
24 *Staffing Shortages*, which cited several studies demonstrating  
25 that patient outcomes improve with higher nurse staffing ratios,  
26 or nurse-to-patient ratios, through results such as shorter  
27 hospital stays, fewer complications, fewer readmissions, less  
28 risk of death, reduced hospital-acquired infections, increased  
29 patient satisfaction, improved patient compliance with treatment  
30 plans, improved pain management, and fewer medication errors,



1 and that nurse staffing ratios may be especially important for  
2 patients of color; and

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4 WHEREAS, the Joint Commission, the nation's leading health  
5 care accrediting body, has established National Performance Goal  
6 12, effective January 1, 2026, which formally recognizes that  
7 hospital staffing levels and competencies must align with  
8 patient needs as a critical component of clinical quality and  
9 patient safety; and

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11 WHEREAS, data from the 2025 *Hawai'i Nursing Workforce Supply*  
12 *Statewide Report* and the 2026 informational brief on The State  
13 of Hawai'i's LPN & RN Workforces by the Center for Nursing show  
14 there is an adequate number of registered nurses in the islands  
15 to meet existing demand, indicating the number of registered  
16 nurses statewide is not a barrier to safe staffing; and

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18 WHEREAS, the Center for Nursing reports findings from a  
19 2023 Nursing Wellbeing, Recruitment, and Retention Strategic  
20 Initiative Working Group literature review that Hawaii  
21 registered nurses felt so stressed at work that they considered  
22 leaving the nursing profession, and that nurses increasingly  
23 indicated physical and mental health as leading contributors to  
24 their desire to leave the workforce; and

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26 WHEREAS, creating supportive work environments with safe  
27 staffing levels is essential to attracting the next generation  
28 of nurses to Hawaii's workforce and retaining the experienced  
29 nurses currently practicing in Hawaii's health care facilities;  
30 and

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32 WHEREAS, establishing a central repository of safe staffing  
33 standards, as adopted by other states or recommended by industry  
34 professionals, will allow for better-informed decision-making by  
35 health care providers, policymakers, and the public; now,  
36 therefore,

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38 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
39 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026,  
40 that the Center for Nursing is requested to compile a  
41 comprehensive list of recommended safe patient staffing ratios  
42 for all nursing specialties and subspecialties across all health



1 care settings and to maintain a repository for this information;  
2 and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Center for Nursing is  
5 requested to make the repository of recommended safe patient  
6 staffing ratios publicly available no later than twenty days  
7 prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2027; and

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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Hawaii's health care facilities  
10 are urged to use every effort to implement safe patient staffing  
11 ratios that reflect the standards compiled by the Center for  
12 Nursing; and

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

