

THE PRACTICAL NURSE TRAINING EXTENSION ACT  
OF 1961

MARCH 24, 1961.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. POWELL, from the Committee on Education and Labor, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 4104]

The Committee on Education and Labor, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 4104) to amend title II of the Vocational Education Act of 1946, relating to practical nurse training, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Page 2, line 12, strike out "and" and insert in lieu thereof "or".

The purpose of the amendment is merely to correct a typographical error.

EXPLANATION OF THE BILL

The bill would amend title II of the Vocational Education Act of 1946 to extend for 4 fiscal years beyond the present termination date of June 30, 1961, the authorization of appropriations for Federal grants to the States for vocational education programs in practical nurse training. Annual appropriations not to exceed \$5 million, as provided in existing law, would be authorized.

The bill would further amend the existing law by removing provisions which require that State plans in order to be approvable must provide for extension and improvement of practical nurse training programs, and by making Guam eligible to participate.

BACKGROUND OF THE BILL

Title III of Public Law 911, 84th Congress (Act of August 2, 1956; 20 U.S.C. 15aa et seq.) amended the Vocational Education Act of 1946 to authorize a 5-year program of grants to the States to pay, within the limits of a State's allotment, 50 percent of the cost of carrying out

State plans designed to extend and improve practical nurse training. This program was authorized pursuant to the recommendations of President Eisenhower and Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Folsom for legislation to overcome crucial areas of personnel shortages in the field of health.

A Senate bill, S. 3025 of the 86th Congress, which was substantially the same as H.R. 4104, passed the Senate on May 26, 1960. A House bill, H.R. 11893, 86th Congress, a bill identical to H.R. 4104, was reported by the Committee on Education and Labor on June 28, 1960, but no further action was taken with respect to it. The present administration supports extension of the practical nurse training program.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS UNDER PUBLIC LAW 911

The training programs supported under Public Law 911 have increased the supply of trained practical nurses available for employment in hospitals, nursing homes, industrial health units, and private homes. Moreover, the operation of the program has resulted in improving and standardizing the quality of training and in a greatly improved application of State licensing standards.

At present, 49 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are operating practical nurse training programs under Public Law 911. All States, except the District of Columbia, have laws requiring the licensing of practical nurses, and it is virtually impossible for a person to become a practical nurse today without having had formal training. Formerly, it was a general practice to waive licensure requirements because of the pressing need for practical nurses and the lack of training programs.

The training program for practical nurses covers a 1-year period divided between vocational school classrooms and laboratory instruction and supervised experience with patients in a hospital. The instructional staff, composed principally of professional nurses, provides both the classroom teaching and supervision of practice in the hospital. Training programs conform to the requirements of the practical nursing licensing laws.

There has been a steady increase in the number of these training programs and in enrollments in them since the enactment of Public Law 911. In 1956 enrollments were 16,069. Under the act, in 1957, enrollments rose to 19,431; to 22,787 in 1958; and 27,963 in 1959. The number of Federally supported programs was 311 in 1957, and had increased to 432 programs in 1958-59 and 452 programs in 1960. In addition to the regular enrollments, during the 4 years, 1957-60, 40,000 practical nurses attended extension classes designed to up grade their qualifications.

The quality of these programs of vocational education in practical nurse training has been greatly improved under Public Law 911. At the State level, many more States than previously have employed professional nurse supervisors on the State staff to organize and promote training programs and to provide advice in the formulation of standards. As a result, extensive curriculum developments have been achieved, and there has been improved correlation of teaching in the classroom and clinical areas. More professional nurses have been added to school faculties to provide instruction and supervised practice throughout the program.

## EXISTING NEED IN THE FIELD OF PRACTICAL NURSING

Despite the progress under Public Law 911 in establishing high-caliber practical nurse training programs, the growing need for trained practical nurses is not being met. The basic factor in this growing need is the increasingly important role of the trained practical nurse in providing nursing services in our essential health facilities. More and more practical nurses are employed by hospitals to perform essential nursing duties as a member of the patient-care team. Practical nurses, working under the supervision of professional nurses, relieve professional nurses from many nonprofessional tasks, thus assuring better nursing care of more patients.

Practical nurses also perform essential services in nursing homes, chronic disease hospitals, private homes, and industrial and other establishments maintaining health facilities. Most of these needs for the services of practical nurses outside the hospital are not being met. For example, of the 23,000 nursing homes in the United States, only 9,000 have the services of either a professional or a trained practical nurse. Yet, 90 percent of the graduates of the practical nurse training programs are being employed by the hospitals in which they receive their training.

The needs for practical nurses of general hospitals alone are not being met. In the last year for which there is comparable data, 1958, there were 264,000 professional nurses employed in general hospitals. Of this number, about 174,000 were general duty nurses. At the same time, about 77,000 practical nurses and 245,000 untrained nurses' aides were employed in these hospitals. Since practical nurses could effectively constitute from one-fourth to one-third of the total nursing personnel giving direct care to patients, there was a shortage of 47,000 to 88,000 practical nurses in general hospitals in 1958.

The demand for nursing services will continue to grow in the years ahead as it has in the last several decades. Our rising national birth rate, coupled with the increasing proportion of older persons in our population, has swelled the numbers of the very young and the aged, the two groups most in need of nursing care. Then too, there has been a steady increase in hospital admittances among all age groups in the population. This, together with the fact that patients are being discharged from hospitals after a shorter stay, increases the need for nursing services. The nurse, both professional and practical, is becoming a far more important member of the modern medical team.

To meet these needs there are today about 165,000 trained practical nurses in the United States. With the extension of the program of Federal support for vocational education in practical nurse training, we can expect that enrollments in training programs will continue to increase at a rate of approximately 2,500 annually. By the end of the extended period, June 30, 1965, enrollments should have reached 42,500, of which some 80 percent, or 34,000, would graduate. This number of trained practical nurses entering employment by 1965 would come close to meeting anticipated needs. Without the assistance of the Federal Government, however, there would appear to be little chance of achieving this goal.

## SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

*First section*

This section provides that the short title of this act will be "The Practical Nurse Training Extension Act of 1961".

*Section 2*

This section amends section 201 of title II of the Vocational Education Act of 1946 to extend the duration of such title through the fiscal year ending June 30, 1965. The title as presently written would expire at the end of the 1961 fiscal year. The section also removes the limitation in present law which provides that funds appropriated under this title may only be used to "extend and improve" practical nurse training. In contrast, under the amendment such funds could be used for any type of practical nurse training, not merely uses which constitute an extension and improvement of such training.

*Section 3*

This section amends section 202 of title II of the Vocational Education Act of 1946 to include sums appropriated under the Act of August 1, 1956 (20 U.S.C. 34), in making computations of allotments under such title. The Act of August 1, 1956, extends coverage of the other parts of the Vocational Education Acts to Guam. The section also provides a minimum allotment of \$5,000 a year for Guam, which is newly brought under the title.

*Section 4*

This section amends section 203 of title II of the Vocational Education Act of 1946, which relates to State plans, to make the changes necessary to remove the restrictions which presently permit approval only of State plans which provide for the extension or improvement of practical nurse training.

*Section 5*

The section amends the definition of "State" contained in section 210 of title II of the Vocational Education Act of 1946, so that such term will include Guam.

*Section 6*

This effective date section provides that the amendments will become effective on July 1, 1961.

## CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with clause 3 of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as introduced, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in *italic*, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in *roman*):

## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT OF 1946

TITLE II—VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN PRACTICAL  
NURSE TRAINING

## AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 201. There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1957, and for each of the next **[four]** *eight*

fiscal years a sum not to exceed \$5,000,000, for grants to States with State plans [to extend and improve] for practical nurse training approved pursuant to section 203.

GRANTS TO STATES FOR [EXTENSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF] PRACTICAL NURSE TRAINING

SEC. 202. (a) From the sums appropriated for any fiscal year pursuant to section 201, each State shall be entitled to an allotment of an amount bearing the same ratio to such sums as the total of the amounts apportioned under title I [and], the Act of March 18, 1950 (20 U.S.C. 31-33), and the Act of August 1, 1956 (20 U.S.C. 34) to such State for such year bears to the total of the amounts so apportioned to all the States for such year. The allotment to any State under the preceding sentence for a fiscal year which is less than \$10,000 (or, in the case of the Virgin Islands and Guam, which is less than \$5,000) shall be increased to that amount, the total of the increases thereby required being derived by proportionately reducing the allotments to each of the remaining States under the preceding sentence, but with such adjustments as may be necessary to prevent the allotment of any of such remaining States from being thereby reduced to less than that amount.

(b) The amount of any allotment to a State under subsection (a) for any fiscal year which the State certifies to the Commissioner will not be required for carrying out the State plan (if any) approved under this title, shall be available for reallocation from time to time, on such dates as the Commissioner may fix, to other States in proportion to the original allotments to such States under subsection (a) for such year. Any amount so reallocated to a State shall be deemed part of its allotment under subsection (a).

(c) From each State's allotment under this section for any fiscal year, the Commissioner shall pay to such State a portion of the cost of carrying out the State plan approved under this title. To the extent permitted by the State's allotment under subsection (a) for any fiscal year, the portion of the cost of carrying out the State plan paid under this section shall be 75 per centum of such cost in the case of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1957, and the fiscal year ending June 30, 1958, and 50 per centum of such cost in the case of each of the next [three] seven fiscal years.

STATE PLANS

SEC. 203. (a) To be approvable under this title, a State plan [to extend and improve] for practical nurse training shall—

(1) designate the State board as the sole agency for the administration of the plan or for the supervision of administration of the plan by local educational agencies;

(2) provide that the individual supervising the functions of the State board under the plan shall be a registered professional nurse or shall have the consultative services of a registered professional nurse available to him;

(3) show the plans, policies, and methods to be followed in [extending and improving] providing practical nurse training under the State plan, and in administering and supervising the

administration of the plan, and provide such accounting, budgeting, and other fiscal methods and procedures as are necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the plan;

(4) contain minimum qualifications for teachers, teacher-trainers, supervisors, and directors; and

(5) provide that the State board will make such reports, in such form and containing such information, as the Commissioner may from time to time reasonably require to carry out his functions under this title, and comply with such provisions as he may from time to time find necessary to assure the correctness and verification of such reports.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### DEFINITIONS

SEC. 210. For purposes of this title—

(a) The term "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Education.

(b) The term "practical nurse training" means training of less than college grade which is given in schools or classes (including field or laboratory work incidental thereto) under public supervision and control and is conducted as part of a program designed to fit individuals, engaged in or preparing to engage in employment as practical nurses, for such employment. The term includes also training of a similar nature, which is of less than college grade and is given and conducted as provided above, designed to fit individuals engaged or preparing to engage in other health occupations in hospitals or other health agencies, for such occupations. In addition, the term includes vocational guidance in connection with any such program and the inservice training of teachers, teacher-trainers, supervisors, and directors for any such program, but does not include courses which have only incidental relationship to the specialized training needed by an individual for useful employment as a practical nurse or in such other health occupations.

(c) The term "practical nurse" means a person who is trained to care for subacute, convalescent, and chronic patients under the direction of a licensed physician or under the supervision of a registered nurse, or to assist a registered nurse in the care of acute illness.

(d) The term "local educational agency" means a board of education or other legally constituted local school authority having administrative control and direction of public secondary schools in a county, township, independent, or other school district, or having such control and direction over vocational education in such schools.

(e) The term "State" includes [Alaska, Hawaii,] the Virgin Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

(f) The term "State board" means the State board of vocational education, or the State board primarily responsible for the supervision of public elementary and secondary schools, as designated in the State plan.

(g) The cost of administration of a State plan for practical nurse training may not include any portion of the cost of the purchase, preservation, erection, or repair of any building or buildings or the purchase or rental of any land.

\* \* \* \* \*