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SENATE FLOOR ALERT

SB 323 (Hernandez) – Senate Third Reading – File #49

May 7, 2015

TO: Members of the California State Senate

Re: ***SB 323 (Hernandez), as Amended on April 22, 2015******Position: SUPPORT***

The University of California (UC) urges you to support Senate Bill (SB) 323, a bill introduced by Senator Hernandez in the current legislative session that proposes changes in the “scope of practice” for nurse practitioners who are licensed to practice in California.

The implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act has had an unprecedented impact on California’s demand for health services and will exacerbate existing statewide health workforce challenges. The demographic changes occurring in the state – including the growth and aging of the current population – will significantly increase the demand for primary care providers, including physicians, nurses, physician assistants, and others. Enabling nurse practitioners to work and practice to the full extent of their education and training is an appropriate and available strategy that will help address the primary care physician shortage and expand access to care for many Californians.

As you are likely aware, the University of California operates the largest health sciences system in the nation. SB 323 proposes changes that could impact UC in many important ways given the University’s roles as educators of future California health professionals; providers of clinical care in UC hospitals and clinics; and employers facing rising health benefit costs for UC employees.

Among UC’s 17 health professional schools and many other health professions training “programs” are three UC Schools of Nursing (located at Davis, Los Angeles, and San Francisco), and a growing program in Nursing Science at UC Irvine. All four of these UC campuses train advanced practice nurses. Each school/program is accredited by the national Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) – which is an autonomous accrediting agency contributing to the improvement of the public’s health by ensuring the quality and integrity of baccalaureate, graduate, and residency programs in nursing. All of these programs have exceptional records of success, with virtually no attrition; and all students that graduate from UC’s nurse practitioner programs meet national and state standards of education.

On behalf of the University of California, the UC nursing schools and programs, we commend Senator Hernandez for his leadership on this issue and urge your “aye” vote. Please feel free to contact Angela Gilliard, Legislative Director at (916) 445-9924, if you have any questions.

UC urges an “AYE” vote on SB 323 (Hernandez)