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June 20, 2016

The Honorable Rudy Salas, Chair
Assembly Business and Professions Committee
1020 N Street, Room 383
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 323 (Hernandez), as amended July 9, 2015
Scheduled for Hearing in the Assembly Business and Professions
Committee on June 28, 2016
Position: Support

Dear Chair Salas:

The University of California (UC) is very pleased 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. Approximately 1.7 to 3 million Californians became eligible for health benefits in 2014. 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. Collectively referred to as UC Health, this system includes 17 health professional schools on seven UC campuses, and 10 hospitals operated by the UC medical centers. 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),

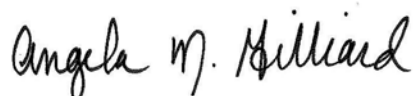
and a growing program in Nursing Science at UC Irvine. All four of these UC campuses train advanced practice nurses. Each school/program is accredited by the national Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) – which is an autonomous accrediting agency contributing to the improvement of the public’s 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.

Twenty other U.S. states have adopted full practice authority for nurse practitioners. The intent of this measure aligns with guiding principles that UC has developed for purposes of considering proposed legislative changes in scope of practice. Among these principles are considerations of issues related to: quality of care; access to care; leveraging skills and qualifications, and the anticipated cost impact.

The Institute of Medicine’s 2010 report entitled *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health* and other systematic reviews of the research provide compelling evidence that advanced practice nurses are educated, prepared and qualified to provide high quality patient care in a manner that meets professional standards. In this era of limited resources, the changes proposed in Senator Hernandez’s SB 323 would help increase workforce capacity, improve access to care, and offer much-needed cost savings to California.

On behalf of the University of California, the UC nursing schools and programs, and the people who will benefit from the services of UC’s future advance practice nurse graduates, we commend Senator Hernandez for his leadership on this issue and urge your “aye” vote in committee. Please feel free to contact me at (916) 445-9924 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Angela M. Gilliard, JD
Legislative Director

cc: Senator Ed Hernandez, O.D.
Vice Chair and Members, Assembly Business and Professions
President Janet Napolitano
President & CFO Executive Vice Nathan Brostrom
Executive Vice President John Stobo
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