

The House Committee on Health and Human Services offers the following substitute to HR 448:

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on the Safe Staffing of Nurses in Georgia; and for
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, safe staffing is defined as the development and implementation of valid,
4 reliable, unit-by-unit nurse staffing plans created in coordination with direct care registered
5 nurses (RNs) themselves, and based on each unit's unique circumstances and changing needs;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, the existence of a safe staffing plan in a practice environment serves as a vital
8 tool in the recruitment and retention of qualified nursing professionals to aid in the goal of
9 eliminating a drastic nursing shortage in many areas of Georgia; and

10 WHEREAS, nurse staffing levels are crucial to both optimization of quality of care and
11 controlling institutional costs in both short and long-term fiscal planning; and

12 WHEREAS, nurses represent the largest clinical subgroup in a hospital setting and have been
13 subjected to budgetary constraints in certain settings; and

14 WHEREAS, nurses serve an integral role in a patient's overall healthcare experience from
15 admission to discharge, and after, through care coordination and patient education; and

16 WHEREAS, studies point to appropriate staffing levels providing for a reduction in length
17 of patient stay, preventable events such as falls and infection and patient mortality rates; and

18 WHEREAS, appropriate staffing levels are determined by examining various contributing
19 factors, including: patient complexity, acuity, or stability; the number of admissions,
20 discharges and transfers within a defined timeframe; professional nurse and staff skill level
21 and expertise; unit physical space and layout; and the availability of technical support and
22 other ancillary resources; and

23 WHEREAS, in 2017, the state's current shortage of licensed nursing professionals was on
24 pace to have the nation's sixth highest gap between the supply and demand of nurses by
25 2030.

26 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

27 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
28 on the Safe Staffing of Nurses in Georgia.

29 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of seven members as
30 follows:

31 (A) Three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the
32 House of Representatives, including the chairperson of the Health and Human Services
33 Committee, who shall serve as chairperson;

34 (B) The President of the Georgia Nurses Association, or his or her designee;

35 (C) The President of a Georgia chapter of the American Association of Critical Care
36 Nurses, or his or her designee; and

37 (D) Two members from the private sector with experience in healthcare appointed by
38 the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

39 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study to examine best practices
40 for the safe staffing of nurses in a practice environment and to provide recommendations
41 for the implementation of a standard of safe staffing for nurses in Georgia and
42 recommend any action or legislation which the committee deems necessary or
43 appropriate.

44 (4) **Meetings.** The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee. The committee
45 may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or
46 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and
47 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

48 (5) **Allowances, expenses, and funding.**

49 (A) The legislative members of the committee shall receive the allowances provided
50 for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

51 (B) Members of the committee who are state officials, other than legislative members,
52 or state employees shall receive no compensation for their services on the committee,
53 but they may be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the performance of their
54 duties as members of the committee in the same manner as they are reimbursed for
55 expenses in their capacities as state officials or employees.

56 (C) Members of the committee who are not legislators, state officials, or state
57 employees shall receive a daily expense allowance in an amount the same as that
58 specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 of the Official Code of Georgia

59 Annotated, as well as the mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state
60 employees.

61 (D) The allowances and expenses authorized by this resolution shall not be received
62 by any member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are
63 authorized. Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come
64 from funds appropriated to the House of Representatives; except that funds for the
65 reimbursement of the expenses of state officials, other than legislative members, and
66 state employees shall come from funds appropriated to or otherwise available to their
67 respective agencies.

68 **(6) Report.**

69 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
70 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the
71 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to
72 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

73 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
74 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C)
75 of this paragraph.

76 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
77 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
78 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
79 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

80 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
81 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
82 thereof.

83 **(7) Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2019.