

Date: March 5, 2025

To: House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee
Representative Sean Tarwater, Chair

From: Carol Moreland, MSN, RN
Executive Administrator
Kansas State Board of Nursing

Subject: **HB 2392**

Position: **Neutral (Written)**

The Kansas State Board of Nursing (KSBN) provides this written neutral testimony for HB 2392. This bill concerns nursing workforce development; relating to nursing schools; setting maximum education levels for instructors at nursing schools as a requirement for state approval; amending K.S.A. 65-1119. The mission of the Kansas State Board of Nursing (KSBN) is to protect the public by providing competent nurses and mental health technicians. While KSBN remains neutral on this bill there are concerns discussed below regarding the impact on the quality of the nursing programs.

This bill will amend the nurse practice act regarding the faculty education requirements. The educational preparation requirement for faculty at a nursing program preparing graduates for an RN license would be a nursing or directly related medical degree awarded by a state or nationally accredited school of nursing or medical school approved by the board that is at least one level more advanced than the degree awarded by the program in which they are teaching. Additional or more advanced credentials for faculty shall not be required.

The educational preparation requirement for faculty at a nursing program preparing graduates for an LPN license would be a nursing or directly related medical degree awarded by a state or nationally accredited school of nursing or medical school approved by the board that is at least one level more advanced than the degree awarded by the program in which they are teaching. Additional or more advanced credentials for faculty shall not be required.

This bill is to develop nursing workforce. Nursing education and medical education are not the same. They have different scopes of practice and approaches to patient care. Medical education is focused on diagnosing and treating illness. Nursing education focuses on patient-centered care, advocating for patients and a holistic approach. A person with a medical degree from a medical school is not as familiar with the specific nursing knowledge, skills and competencies that are needed for nursing program faculty. Nursing has a more continuous and direct role in caring for patients, focuses on assessment, communication, patient education, and emotional support. Nurses are responsible for monitoring a patient's condition, administering care, and ensuring the comfort and safety of patients.

The quality of nursing education is decreased when a non-nurse is teaching the didactic and clinical curriculum in a nursing program. A non-nurse has little or no experience performing nursing skills. A faculty member must know the content well to be an effective teacher. There are several indicators of the quality of a nursing program. The preparation of faculty in a nursing program is one indicator of the quality of the nursing program. Student outcomes will be affected by faculty that are not adequately prepared to teach nursing practice. One outcome will be a decreased pass rate on the national licensure examination. If a graduate cannot pass the national licensure examination, the graduate cannot get licensed. Nursing workforce will be negatively affected when graduates cannot get licensed. Employing non nursing faculty at the nursing program may affect the ability of the nursing program to acquire national accreditation for the nursing program. Graduating from a non-accredited nursing program may affect the ability of the graduate to continue their nursing education and have all their credits recognized. Employing faculty that possess a related medical degree can increase the cost of faculty for a nursing program.

This bill states the faculty could possess a directly related medical degree awarded by a state or nationally accredited school of nursing or medical school approved by the board. KSBN doesn't have the knowledge to determine the quality of a medical school and approve the program. Again, one discipline doesn't have adequate knowledge to assess the quality of the other discipline's education program or possess the knowledge and skills to teach the other discipline.

KSBN has a process in place when a faculty member does not meet the educational requirements currently, so there is no need for a new process. There needs to be more financial support for faculty that are continuing their nursing education to get the required degree, not lower the quality of the education.

KSBN encourages the committee to consider leaving faculty requirements at a nursing program at the current requirements. Faculty teaching didactic and clinical at a nursing program should have a nursing degree and not a directly related medical degree. The quality of a nursing program should not be jeopardized by faculty that do not possess nursing knowledge, skills and competencies.

Spector, N., Silvestre, J., Alexander, M., Martin, B., Hooper, J., Squires, A., & Ojemeni, M. (2020) NCSBN Regulatory Guidelines and Evidence-Based Quality Indicators for Nursing Education Programs. *Journal of Nursing Regulation* 11(2), S1 – S64.