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<th>Bill Number/Title</th>
<th>HB 1520: AN ACT establishing the New Hampshire health policy commission.</th>
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| History/Context  | **Introduction:** House Bill 1520 aims to establish a New Hampshire Health Policy Commission with the purpose of monitoring health care delivery and spending. The legislation is before the Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee. The New Hampshire General Court recognizes that delivering better health care at lower cost benefits New Hampshire’s citizens and the state’s economy.  

**History:** The 2017 Health Care Cost and Utilization Report from the Health Care Cost Institute indicates (1) health care spending is continuing to grow; (2) rising prices are driving growth overall; and (3) variation across service categories and sub-groups helps determine where to focus reform efforts. i A recent publication in *The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing* states: “Nurses remain uniquely situated to shape healthcare due to their team approach, proximity to the bedside, and understanding of patient care within the hospital and the community.” ii  

**New Hampshire Data:** (1) New Hampshire’s per person health care expenditure in 2017 was $6,720, the fourth highest in the U.S. New Hampshire also saw an increase of 21.2% in spending between 2013 and 2017. iii (2) According to a former state commissioner for Health and Human Services: “The way we deliver the cost of care in New Hampshire is very high because it’s hospital based.” iv (3) To address rural health, Governor Sununu signed SB 97 into law on July 1, 2019. This legislation seeks to ensure “increased access to affordable health care services in rural areas of the state.” v  

(4) New Hampshire is experiencing a nursing shortage, and patients are going without the care they need. This is particularly problematic for the elderly, with New Hampshire having “one of the oldest populations in the country.” vi (5) The NH Action Coalition “is the driving force to transform health and health care through nursing,” with “nurses leading the way to improve the health of New Hampshire.” vii  

**Why nurses need representation on the New Hampshire Health Policy Commission:**  
One critical piece of New Hampshire’s Nurse Practice Act is “communicating and collaborating with other health care professionals in the management of health care and the implementation of the total health care regimen within and across care settings.” viii Educating and retaining a sufficient nursing workforce are priorities for New Hampshire, and nurses must be at
the forefront in advocating for the profession in order to ensure high quality care for the state’s residents. Nurses bring a unique perspective to health care assessment and delivery and are a needed voice in guiding how the Health Policy Commission seeks, analyzes, and acts on health care data.

**Pros**

- HB 1520 will create a multi-disciplinary team that will advise the Governor and Council, the Attorney General, and the General Court regarding health care policy.
- The duties of the Health Policy Commission shall include: (1) Analyzing and monitoring health care delivery and costs; (2) Addressing the unique needs of health care delivery in rural areas; (3) Creating standards for health care delivery systems that best meet medical, behavioral, and social needs; (4) Safeguarding consumers, patients, and providers regarding prior authorization, coverage, and health care decisions; and (5) Providing an annual report to the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, President of the Senate, and chairpersons of House and Senate committees having jurisdiction over finance and health and human services.
- The legislation allows the Commission to address other matters related to health care policy.

**Cons**

- The list of proposed Commission members does not specifically include a nurse.
- The legislation does not specifically address the need for universal health care coverage (e.g., Medicare for All).

**Committee**

House Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs

**Sponsors**


**Position**

Support with recommendation that a nurse, appointed by NHNA, be added to the Commission.

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