

The Honorable, Nita Lowey

United States Local Representative,

67 North Main St, #101,

New City, NY 10956

Dear Representative Nita Lowey,

**REF: SHORTAGE IN NURSING WORKFORCE**

Today the biggest problem in our healthcare system is the understaffing of the health professionals in different fields, especially in the nursing field. The number of Registered Nurses (RN) is the largest in the U.S. health care center but the vacancy rate continues to rise on a consistent basis. The high demand for health care providers causes further difficulty as the vacancy rate increases. In 2002, studies showed that the workforce shortage in the healthcare estimated to be at 5% and the shortage was predicted to rise to 35% by 2025. It is important to note the factors, that are contributing to the workforce shortage, are multifaceted and are also capitalized by the discontent among the workforce.

One factor is the insufficient number of students enrolled in nursing school compared to the high demand of new registered nurses required over the next ten years. This major issue that plays a role in the shortage of the workforce can be caused by the inability for the U.S. nursing schools to increase enrollment due to the scarcity of the number of nursing school facilities or lack of resources. Another factor that is also currently contributing to the shortage of workforce in the country is the aging workforce. Today, a substantial number of the nursing workforce in the healthcare sector is nearing the retirement age. Approximately a third of the working force is

above 50 years of age, yet the number of young of people joining nursing schools has significantly declined over the years. The various factors of the work environment has shown increased dissatisfaction and studies revealed that at least one in three hospital nurses of 30 years and below were planning to leave their current jobs. This has greatly attributed to poor working conditions, inadequacy of remunerations and wages, heavy workloads, increased overtime, and the use of under-skilled and underqualified workforce.

This shortage and dissatisfaction among the workforce in the healthcare sector has significantly caused fragmentation in proper health care. To avoid future issues, the government should invest in career promotion to help reduce the nursing shortage in the healthcare sector. Different organizations, legislatures, media and nursing schools should collaborate to promote and enhance the nursing careers. This will ensure to improve staffing as more prospective nurses will join the field as the aging workforce retires. The healthcare executives and leaders must also value the workforce in the healthcare sector by enhancing efficient communication, providing an outlet for collaboration, and leading to fulfill work relations. Good communication and collaboration strategies will help to establish organizational goals and priority planning, which will influence optimal professional performance that will ultimately improve the care provided to patients. This will allow nurses to feel more involved, boost their morale, and increase work satisfaction. Appropriate regulations and policies should be established to provide a framework on responsibilities, tasks, and protocols as it will guide in preventing nurses to feel overwhelmed.

It is my humble submission that you will consider this letter and use the solutions made in your capacity to make policies and regulations that will help reduce the workforce shortage and improve workplace satisfaction. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this issue further. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

Stephanie Alex

Nursing Student

Nyack College School of Nursing