

To: Senate Public Health and Welfare
From: Heather Porter, MSN, ACM-RN, NE-BC
Date: February 15, 2022
RE: Proponent SB 453

Chairman Hilderbrand and Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee,

On behalf of NMC Health, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 453. My name is Heather Porter. I am the Chief Clinical and Chief Nursing Officer at NMC Health. My career began as a Licensed Practical Nurse and I have also taught Certified Nurse Aide classes for several years for long term care facilities as an RN. Thank you for your leadership and consideration of our comments today.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 500,000 registered nurses are expected to retire by 2022 and the Bureau projects 1.1 million new registered nurses would be needed to replace retirees.¹ The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics also reports that Kansas is one of five states with the highest concentration of nursing assistant jobs available.¹ By supporting SB 453 additional instructors and courses will be available to expand upon number of Certified Nurse Aide courses in Kansas.

A Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) Scope of Practice allows an LPN to be assigned work by an RN in the area of supportive restorative care. A LPN scope of practice aligns with providing education to the nursing assistant in activities of daily living such as grooming, eating, toileting, transferring and ambulation. Activities of daily living are key components of a Certified Nurse Aides work.

This bill comes at a time when the healthcare industry is in need of a stable and well-trained workforce. Certified Nurse Aides are critical part in the overall delivery of health care in communities across Kansas. Finding ways to expand opportunities for those interested in joining programs to be trained and ensuring that students have access to getting trained in the field is important in addressing current and future workforce needs.

The bill allows greater flexibilities and eliminates barriers to expanded CNA training opportunities in Kansas. Allowing for flexibilities for instructors to these courses means, more Kansans can take the courses necessary to enter the field. Allowing the use of simulated laboratories for training means a more hands-on-trained workforce that will have access to field training options deemed safe and effective by researchers. Expanding qualifying experience for those that are caring for the elderly no matter the clinical setting means more RN's can administer the skills portion of the CNA competency and is correct in the recognition that healthcare staff takes care of the elderly and chronically ill in settings across health care and not solely in long-term care.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We ask that the committee recommend favorably SB 453.

Sincerely,

Heather Porter

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Nursing-assistants.htm>