

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 Third Reader

House Bill 253 (Delegate Angel, *et al.*)
 Health and Government Operations Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

State Board of Nursing - Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses -
 Renewal of Licenses - Continuing Education Units

This bill authorizes a registered nurse (RN) or licensed practical nurse (LPN) to renew a license by providing evidence of completing a minimum number of continuing education units (CEUs), as required by regulations adopted by the State Board of Nursing (BON).

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Special fund expenditures increase by up to \$50,000 in FY 2018 only for BON to modify its existing license renewal software, as discussed below. BON can adopt the required regulations with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SF Expenditure	50,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$50,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Before a license expires, an RN or LPN may renew his or her license by paying a renewal fee set by the board and submitting a renewal application. The application must include satisfactory evidence of completing (1) 1,000 hours of active nursing practice within the five-year period immediately preceding the date of renewal; (2) a course of

instruction, commonly known as a refresher course, approved by the board; or (3) a preceptorship program provided by an employer and approved by the board.

Background: BON advises that it is one of only a few boards that does not accept CEUs for renewal and that studies have shown that there is no discernible difference in the practice of licensees who submit evidence of completing a minimum number of CEUs and those who submit evidence of completing 1,000 hours of active nursing practice within the five-year period immediately preceding the date of renewal. BON further advises that, contingent on passage of enabling legislation, the board voted at its June 2016 meeting to approve the use of CEUs as an option for renewal. The board plans to convene a workgroup to determine the minimum number of CEUs it will require. Once a minimum number has been established, any submission of evidence of completing CEUs as part of a renewal application will be subject to a random compliance audit.

According to BON, the vast majority of licensees provide evidence of having completed 1,000 hours of active nursing practice within the five-year period immediately preceding the date of renewal. BON advises that it renewed 45,185 licenses in fiscal 2016, and that fewer than 10 applicants submitted evidence of completing a refresher course.

State Expenditures: BON advises that it intends to modify its online license renewal software to accept evidence of completing a minimum number of CEUs as part of a renewal application by October 1, 2017. BON estimates, based on past experience modifying its software, that such a change costs approximately \$50,000. However, a specific estimate is not available at this time. To the extent that costs to modify the license renewal software are lower than estimated, special fund expenditures are moderated accordingly.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 2, 2017
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