SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3031

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 14, 2021

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 3031.

As amended, this bill requires the Department of Health (DOH) to establish certain nursing education and professional advancement programs.

Under the bill, the DOH, in consultation with the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, is to develop an infection prevention course specifically designed for licensed practical nurses and registered nurses employed in a long-term care facility. The DOH is to develop methods to encourage and incentivize licensed practical nurses and registered nurses to complete the infection prevention course. The infection prevention course is to include instruction on the following topics: (1) modes of transmission, incubation periods, host resistance, and susceptibility to various infections and communicable diseases; (2) appropriate measures to prevent the spread of infection; (3) processes used to sterilize, disinfect, and sanitize a health care facility; (4) management and communication skills necessary for the coordination of an effective infection prevention program; (5) regulations which govern infection prevention practice; and (6) criteria for identifying health care associated infections in patients.

As amended, the bill requires the DOH, in consultation with the Board of Nursing, is to review the current nursing curriculum and develop methods to encourage licensed practical nurses and registered nurses to enroll in post-acute care residency programs. The DOH, in consultation with the Board of Nursing, is to review the educational and clinical experience requirements for the completion of a nursing degree and determine if the requirements should be modified to better prepare licensed practical nurses and registered nurses to work in post-acute care settings.

Under the bill, the DOH is to develop an infection prevention course for certified nurse aides. The DOH is to include the infection prevention course as a required component of annual in-service

education for certified nurse aides. The infection prevention course is to include instruction on the same topics as the course designed for registered nurses. As amended by the committee, the DOH is to review the current certified nurse aide curriculum, incorporate an infection prevention component into the curriculum, and make any other necessary modifications to the curriculum.

The bill provides that the DOH, in consultation with one or more long-term care facilities in this State and representatives of labor organizations, is to establish a pilot program to develop standards for the professional advancement of certified nurse aides. The standards for the professional advancement of certified nurse aides may be based on: previous work experience, education level, participation in educational opportunities, training, and work performance. The standards may also be based on any applicable out-of-State models for the professional advancement of certified nurse aides.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments remove a reference to residency programs and add licensed practical nurses in the section of the bill that pertains to the infection prevention course for registered nurses.

The committee amendments make the provisions of the bill that apply to registered nurses applicable to licensed practical nurses as well.

The committee amendments also make grammatical changes to the bill to clarify that the DOH is to review the current nursing and certified nurse aide curricula pertaining to infection prevention education.