



## SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **Legislation will address scarcity of nursing faculty in Oregon**

*SB 701 creates loan repayment program to help address Oregon's number one workforce need*

SALEM— With the state's demand for nurses showing no signs of slowing down, the Senate took action this afternoon to create a program that will help attract and keep qualified nurse faculty in Oregon schools. Since 2001, enrollment in nursing programs has doubled while the increase in faculty has risen less than 20 percent. Senate Bill 701 creates the Nursing Faculty Loan Repayment Program to help recruit nursing teachers into Oregon's understaffed nursing programs.

"Each year, more and more nursing instructors are retiring while more and more students want to enroll in nursing programs," said Senator Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin), chief sponsor of the legislation. "Nursing is the number one workforce need in our state. We need to make sure we can provide the education system to meet the demand."

Currently, Oregon schools of nursing turn away applications at an alarming rate – while at the same time demand for nurses continues to grow. The Nursing Faculty Loan Repayment Program will provide loan repayments on behalf of nurse educators who teach at nursing schools in Oregon and who have earned a master's or doctoral degree from an accredited nursing education program. SB 701 allows the state to pursue Federal funds to support the program.

"This program will help our state recruit and keep high quality instructors, many of whom can make more money in the private sector as they can teaching the next generation of nurses," said Deputy Senate Majority Leader Laurie Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham), a public health nurse. "Giving nursing instructors some relief on their Master's or Doctoral degree loans will give our state a real advantage in staffing Oregon's nursing schools."

The bill will now go to the House for consideration.

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