

## S 1031

### National Nursing Shortage Reform and Patient Advocacy Act

**Congress:** 111 (2009–2011, Ended)

**Chamber:** Senate

**Policy Area:** Health

**Introduced:** May 13, 2009

**Current Status:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

**Latest Action:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. (May 13, 2009)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/senate-bill/1031>

## Sponsor

**Name:** Sen. Boxer, Barbara [D-CA]

**Party:** Democratic • **State:** CA • **Chamber:** Senate

## Cosponsors

No cosponsors are listed for this bill.

## Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee	Senate	Referred To	May 13, 2009

## Subjects & Policy Tags

### Policy Area:

Health

## Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
111 HR 2273	Related bill	May 7, 2009: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.

National Nursing Shortage Reform and Patient Advocacy Act - Amends the Public Health Service Act to require hospitals to implement nurse-to-patient staffing plans that provide adequate, appropriate, and quality delivery of health care services and protect patient safety. Sets forth minimum direct care registered nurse-to-patient ratios for emergency units, operating rooms, critical care units, and nursery units. Prohibits hospitals from imposing mandatory overtime and layoffs to meet required ratios.

Requires hospitals to post a uniform notice that sets forth nurse-to-patient staffing ratios and requirements and to maintain records of actual direct care registered nurse-to-patient ratios in each hospital unit.

Requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to: (1) establish a grant program to cover the costs of purchasing safe patient handling equipment; (2) establish procedures to allow the filing of complaints against a hospital for violations of this Act; (3) carry out a registered nurse workforce initiative to ensure an adequate number of registered nurses and reduce critical workforce shortages in hospitals; (4) establish nursing educational assistance grant programs; and (5) award grants to hospitals for a five-year nursing preceptorship and mentorship demonstration project to address nurse workforce shortages, improve patient care, and promote the retention of nurses in the workforce.

Requires the Secretary of Labor to establish a federal safe patient handling standard to prevent musculoskeletal disorders for direct care registered nurses and other health care providers.

Grants nurses certain rights, including the right to act as a patient advocate and to refuse assignments that violate the requirements of this Act or for which the nurse is not prepared by education, training, or experience. Prohibits hospitals from discharging, discriminating, or retaliating against a nurse for refusing a work assignment.

Amends the Social Security Act to make Medicare and Medicaid providers subject to the requirements of this Act.

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## **Actions Timeline**

- **May 13, 2009:** Introduced in Senate
- **May 13, 2009:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR S5441-5442)
- **May 13, 2009:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.