

S 864

National Nursing Shortage Reform and Patient Advocacy Act

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Health

Introduced: Mar 25, 2015

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. (Mar 25, 2015)

Official Text: https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/864

Sponsor

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

Party: Democratic • State: CA • Chamber: Senate

Cosponsors (4 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Brown, Sherrod [D-OH]	D · OH		Mar 25, 2015
Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT]	I · VT		Jul 23, 2015
Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA]	D · MA		Sep 29, 2015
Sen. Baldwin, Tammy [D-WI]	D · WI		Oct 22, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee	Senate	Referred To	Mar 25, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Health

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HR 1602	Related bill	Apr 7, 2015: 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 and submit to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) a staffing plan that complies with specified minimum nurse-to-patient ratios by unit. Requires HHS to develop a transparent method for establishing nurse staffing requirements above minimum ratios.

Directs HHS to adjust Medicare payments to hospitals to cover additional costs incurred in providing services to Medicare beneficiaries that are attributable to compliance with such ratios.

Gives nurses the right to act as the patient's advocate by initiating action to improve health care and by giving the patient an opportunity to make informed health care decisions. Allows a nurse to object to, or refuse to participate in, any assignment if it would violate minimum ratios or if the nurse is not prepared by education or experience to fulfill the assignment without compromising the safety of a patient or jeopardizing the nurse's license. Prohibits a hospital from: (1) taking specified actions against a nurse based on the nurse's refusal to accept an assignment for such a reason; or (2) discriminating against any individual for good faith complaints relating to the care, services, or conditions of the hospital or of any related facilities.

Adds stipends to the nurse workforce loan repayment and scholarship program. Expands the nurse retention grant program to authorize programs to implement nurse preceptorship and mentorship projects.

## **Actions Timeline**

---

- **Mar 25, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
- **Mar 25, 2015:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.